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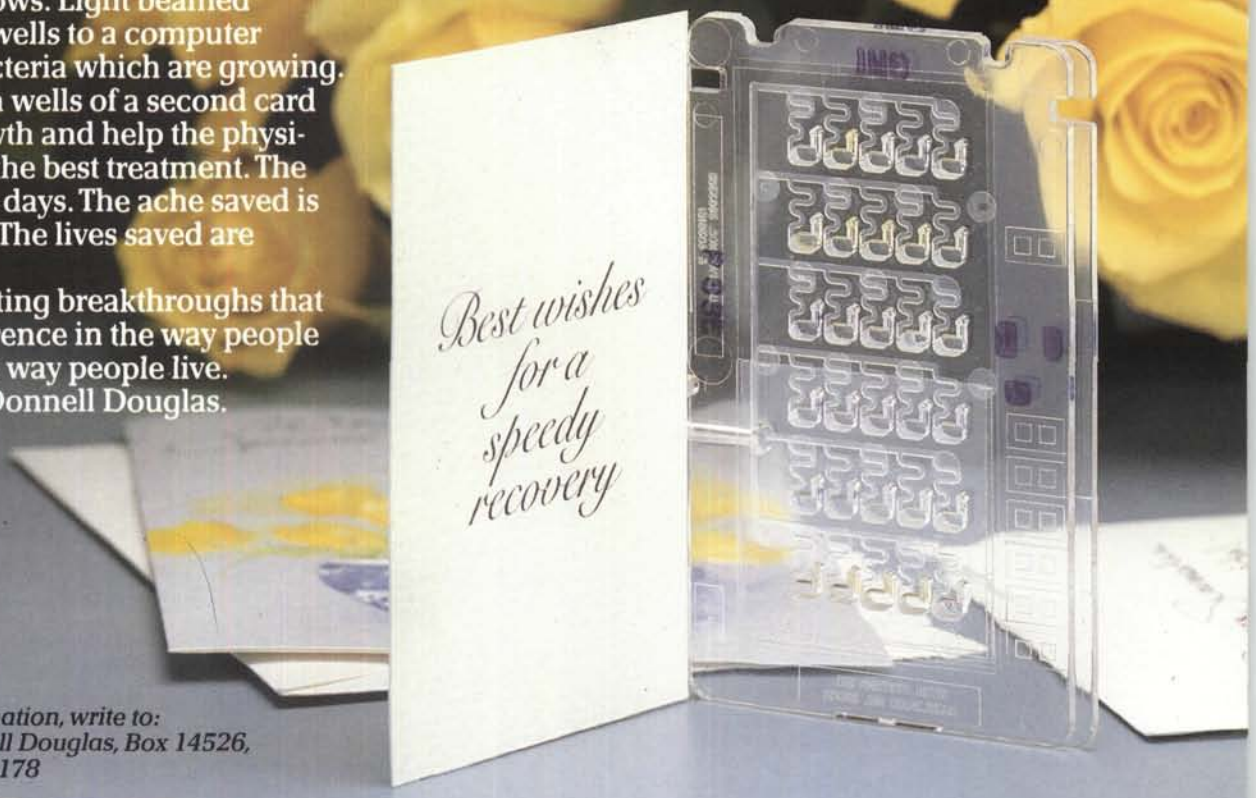

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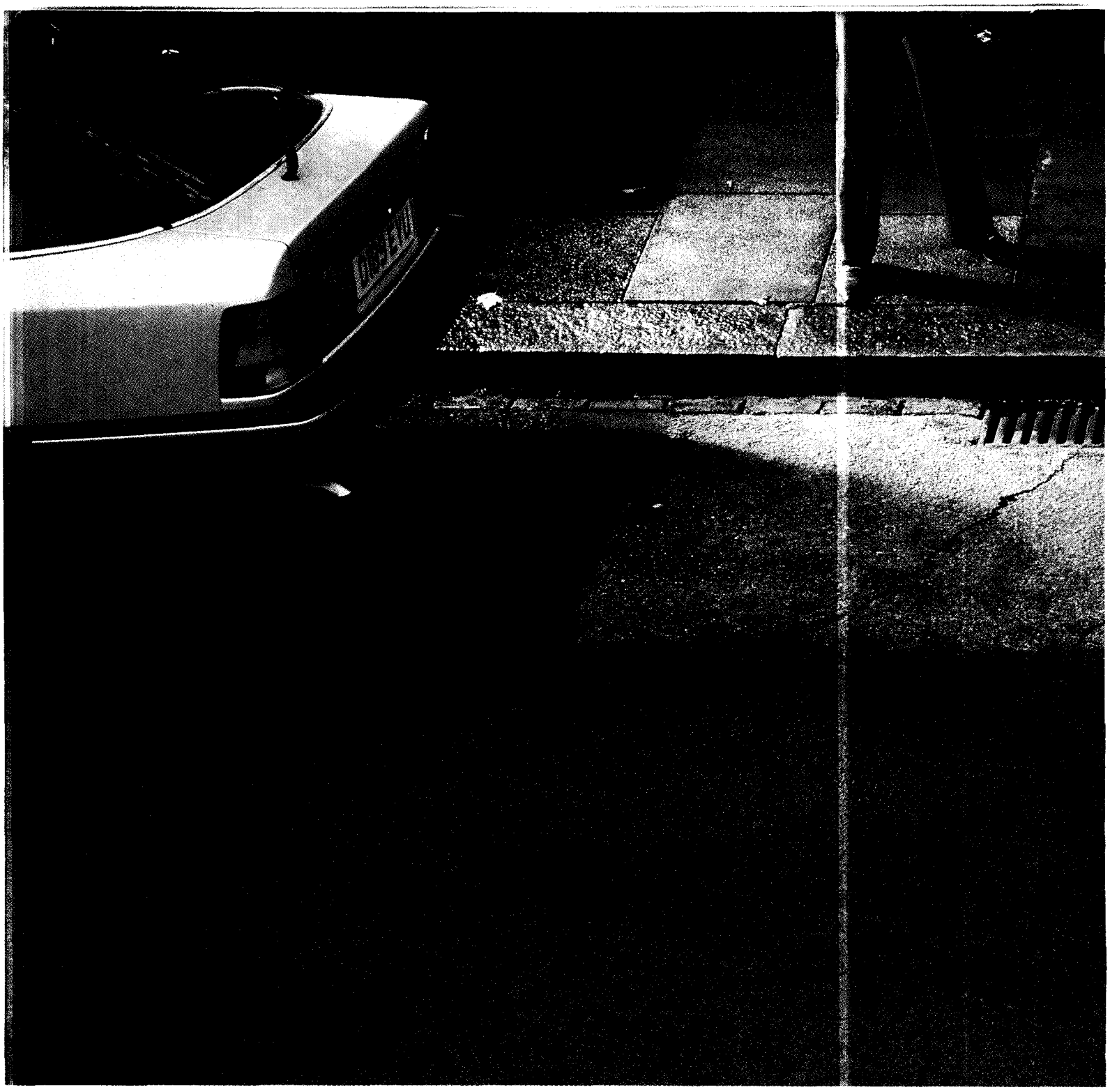

What are the odds your car will vanish tonight?

There's an old saying: 'You never appreciate what you've got till it's gone.'

The truth of it is never more keenly felt than when you stare, in disbelief, at the empty space where you last saw your car.

As Government statistics clearly show, theft is becoming more likely all the time. Over one and a half million cars are stolen or broken into every year. Four thousand every 24 hours.

So acute is the problem that in November 1985, the Home Office called for 'A new generation of theft proof cars'.*

As it happened, Ford were ahead of them. They had already developed a new high security locking system for the Granada. Since then it's been introduced on Escorts, Orions and Transit vans. And an even better system has been designed for the latest Sierras.

The locks themselves have rotating disc plates rather than conventional spring-loaded tumblers. This makes them highly

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And what is Ford doing to reduce them?

resistant to picking – and less likely to freeze in winter.

The key designs, with a thousand permutations each, are almost impossible to copy. And if a thief did gain access to the car, it would only be to encounter a further obstacle. A very sophisticated steering lock.

One hundred percent theft proof? That would be a rash claim indeed. What is certain is that, faced with Ford's new locks, the smart thief would look for easier pickings elsewhere.

High security locking is part of the future; another example of Ford making the benefits of progress available to all. That's something they do better than anyone.

Could this be the key to their success?

*As reported in The London Standard November 20th, 1985.

Ford

Cars with a future.

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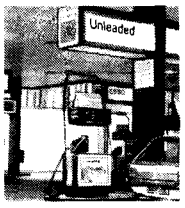
LEAPING FORWARD WITH UNLEADED.



In the recent Budget, the duty on unleaded petrol was reduced – so now it's no more expensive than leaded petrol.

"What's it to do with me?" you may ask. "My car can't run on it."

Well, it may interest you to know that already many cars can run on unleaded petrol, and the number is increasing daily. In fact, very soon all new cars will be designed to run on unleaded.

Along with our EEC partners, the UK has agreed that unleaded petrol should be made widely available by October 1989.

And in this 1987 European Year of the Environment, Esso is taking firm steps to help achieve this goal.

In fact, since mid-1986 we have already introduced a national network of over 100 strategically chosen sites selling Esso Unleaded.

For motorists, the changeover will probably raise more questions than answers, which is why we've produced this page.

Alternatively, pick up the Esso Unleaded leaflets, including our Service Station Site Directory, at your nearest Esso Station.

We hope you will find them helpful.

1 Q What is unleaded petrol?
A *It is petrol to which no lead has been deliberately added.*

2 Q Why is lead added to petrol?
A *Small quantities of lead compounds can be added to petrol to increase its octane number. This allows the use of higher compression ratio engines with more ignition spark advance, which means improved engine efficiency and fuel economy. To replace lead we have to introduce more high octane compounds to compensate.*

3 Q What is 'low lead' petrol compared to unleaded?
A *Low lead refers to the normal leaded petrol which is currently available. This is because the lead content was reduced in all petrol to 0.15g per litre on 1st January 1986 from its previous level of 0.40g per litre, in line with British Standard 4040. Unleaded petrol is allowed to contain up to 0.013g per litre which is why it cannot be called 'lead free', although on the Continent this term may be used where unleaded cannot be translated.*

4 Q Can I use unleaded petrol in my car?
A *The majority of cars in the United Kingdom have been designed to run on leaded petrol. However, nearly 40% of post-1985 petrol cars are now capable of running on unleaded fuel, although most will need some minor adjustments to allow this. Eventually all new petrol cars will incorporate the necessary modifications for them to run on unleaded. Before attempting to use unleaded petrol you should check first with your car dealer or motor manufacturer.*

5 Q What is a catalytic converter?
A *Although not legally required in the UK at present, a catalytic converter is a device that can be fitted to the exhaust system. When the exhaust fumes pass through the converter, emissions such as nitrogen oxide and carbon monoxide are burnt up or oxidised. Unfortunately, lead damages the catalysts, so they are only effective on cars already using unleaded petrol.*

6 Q Where can I buy unleaded petrol?
A *Esso were the first company in the UK to put unleaded on sale. And since then we have been increasing the number of our service stations that sell unleaded petrol. We now have more stations selling unleaded than all our competitors put together. For details of where you can buy Esso Unleaded please pick up a FREE copy of our latest site directory from any Esso station.*

7 Q How will I know which pump dispenses unleaded petrol?
A *Esso Unleaded pumps are clearly marked UNLEADED and will usually have a small pump nozzle and identification cover marked UNLEADED on the nozzle.*

8 Q What happens if I inadvertently put the wrong fuel in my car?
A *Given the safeguards mentioned above it would be very difficult for you to do so. However, an isolated incident may not be too serious. Unleaded petrol used in an engine designed to take leaded, or leaded petrol used in an unleaded engine, could eventually cause damage to the engine.*

9 Q What about other petrol fuelled equipment, like my lawn mower and chain saw?
A *Some will operate successfully on unleaded. However, you should check with the manufacturer or dealer for specific advice and follow their recommendations.*

10 Q For how long will leaded petrol continue to be available?
A *Unleaded petrol will be phased in over a number of years. Therefore both leaded and unleaded will be available for a transition period which will be as long as the present product is required to supply today's cars.*

11 Q What happens if I take my car to the Continent?
A *Both leaded and unleaded petrol are available in Europe. There may be slight differences in unleaded to take account of local conditions, but this is unlikely to affect a car that can run on unleaded petrol.*

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Dan Pinck

Paging Mr Ross

Old Days at "The New Yorker"

A FEW DAYS AFTER I began working on *The New Yorker*, in the spring of 1949, I was called to the office of Mr Ross's male secretary and given a folder which I was ordered to take to Mr Ross's apartment on Park Avenue as fast as I could. I got to his apartment house, which was two blocks up from the Waldorf Astoria, hurried through the lobby and took the elevator up to his apartment. I rang the buzzer twice and waited; in a few moments I heard footsteps charging towards the door. Then the door opened. An ungainly man wearing white suspenders looked quizzically at me through a pair of horn-rimmed glasses. I looked back at him through my own horn-rimmed glasses. I was gathering up my courage to ask: *Mr Ross*? when he opened the door wider and roared:

"Jesus Christ! Who the hell are you?"

"Mr Ross", I answered meekly.

"Who the hell do you think I am?" he roared. "Jesus Christ?"

"No, sir", I said.

He asked me again who the hell I was.

"I'm the new office-boy", I said in a whisper.

"Jesus Christ", he said, and a large uncomprehending grin broke open his face.

"I've got some stuff for you", I said.

"Did my secretary give it to you?" he asked, suspiciously.

"Yes, sir", I said. "He just gave it to me a few minutes ago and I ran over here with it."

"You should have taken a taxi", he said without rancour. "Come in."

I went in and handed him the folder.

"Wait here", he said, pointing to his living-room. "Better still, no, you haven't got the typewriter case with you and I don't like to send the goddam thing back without it being in its case."

"Yes, sir", I said.

"You wait in the living-room, you can read a magazine or a book, I want to send this stuff back right away as soon as I'm finished", he said.

He left me and went into his study, a small room with a window overlooking Lexington Avenue. Stunned, I went over to a couch in the living-room, sat down and looked about the room. There were no magazines on the coffee-table, not even his own. Then I noticed a set of bound volumes of *The New Yorker* in a bookshelf above the mantelpiece. I got up and took down the first volume and then I went back and read the first issue: 21 February 1925. Eustace Tilley studied a butterfly on the cover, all right; I opened the first issue and discovered that it didn't seem like the *New Yorker* that I was accustomed to. On the second page I read:

> ". . . THE NEW YORKER asks consideration for its first number. It recognises certain shortcomings and realises that it is impossible for a magazine fully to establish its character in one number. At the same time it feels a great deal of pride in many of its features and heart-felt gratitude for the support it already has received."

There were none of the features that I recognised, except in name only: "Talk of the Town" was an unfamiliar jumble of chatter on a jarring note; "Profiles" was written by Golly-wogg, a page-and-a-quarter in length about a maestro I'd never heard of—Giulio Gatti-Cazzaza; a social column called "In Our Midst" noted that:

> "Crosby Gaige, of here and Peekskill, is leaving for Miami next week to join the pleasure seekers in the sunny southland."

At the end of the book-review column, the magazine reviewed in one sentence *A Passage To India*:

> "A foaming-up of India's race hate, pictured with searching skill."

I went on to the following issues and had nearly covered 1925.

"You don't want to read that stuff", Mr Ross moaned as he came into the living-room. "That stuff gives me the shakes whenever I even think about it."

"That was years ago", I said, hoping to assuage his discomfort.

"Take this goddam stuff back to the office", he said, handing me the same folder. "Take a cab."

I got up and put the volume back on the shelf.

Ross opened the door for me.

"Don't lose it", he said as I walked out the door. "Take

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a cab. Don't run", he called to me.

"No, sir", I said over my shoulder. "Thank you."

I heard the door bang.

I TOOK A CAB ON Park Avenue and as soon as I got back to the office I gave the folder to his secretary, who asked me what had kept me so long. "Mr Ross, obviously", I answered. "He mentioned something about a case being here that I didn't have with me."

"That's the case for his typewriter. I'll give it to you next time he wants you."

I thanked the secretary and went back to the office-boys' room. "How was it?" one of them asked. "Did you dig those crazy suspenders?" Another office-boy (they were all considerably older or younger than I) asked me whether Ross had let me into his apartment or had made me wait in the corridor. I told him, surprised at the question, that he'd invited me in. "Well", the office-boy said, "I suppose it's because you're wearing nice clothes."

SHORTLY AFTER I first met Mr Ross, I became known around the magazine as Ross's Boy, and whenever there happened to be a special errand, I was usually the office-boy who was directed to Mr Ross's office. As a rule, my day began about half-an-hour before the regular staff appeared; at nine-thirty in the morning I got off the elevator on the 19th floor and picked up three bundles of newspapers and took them to the office-boys' room, a windowless sweaty cubicle with pencilled messages written on the green walls. There I untied the newspapers and sorted them into shape for the morning's delivery, two *New York Times*, one *Tribune*, one *Journal-American*, and one *Daily News* for the Checking Department; one copy of each paper for Wolcott Gibbs; and so on.

Mr Ross did not receive any papers on this delivery, but after I dispatched the papers I went to Mr Ross's office and took his pencil-box back to the office-boys' room. I inspected each one, as carefully as one might inspect the triggering apparatus of a hydrogen bomb, before I sharpened it, for my instructions from his secretary and from the office manager as well had indicated in a thorough briefing that Mr Ross required his pencils to be a certain length, neither shorter nor longer than a fixed size, and without any teeth marks on them.

Mr Ross ate pencils. I think he ate them, for I never found anyone else in his office; and when I inspected them in the morning, I discovered that they had been chewed, bitten into, and possibly eaten. I was required to sharpen them into a fine point, but not *too* fine, for the lead was not supposed to break or crumble under the pressure of Mr Ross's hand. It took me two weeks to master this detail, but I eventually succeeded and one afternoon when I was in Mr Ross's office he said, "Son, you're a goddam good pencil-sharpener."

Mr Ross usually showed up in the office around eleven. Often he would call just before he left his apartment on Park Avenue, and I would go across the street to a drug-store and purchase a half-pint of cream and a five-cent package of cheese crackers. I would time my entrance with the food to coincide with his arrival. As soon as he took off his battered old hat and hung up his battered old coat, he would sit down at his desk and open his briefcase. Then I would pour his cream into a glass. "I wish I were running a newspaper", he would moan, gruffly rhetorical. "Out West." Then he would drink the cream and make a face of utter disgust. "Goddam." I would take a look at his pencils. "Why did I ever start this magazine?" I would open the cheese crackers and put them on a plate on his desk. "At least somebody does something around here. Son, you sharpen pencils good." He was all set. "Oh God. Oh Montreal", he would say. "Where's my secretary?" Mr Ross's secretary would appear in the doorway from the outer office. "Mister Ross?" he would hiss, and I would leave.

IN A NEARBY OFFICE there were three secretaries who managed to coordinate Mr Ross's editorial notes with the other departments of the magazine. One of them transcribed his dictaphone notes. I often stopped in this office after leaving the cream and crackers with Mr Ross. As usual, the girls were laughing and giggling and trying not to do either.

"What's so funny?" I asked.

"Listen to this", one of them said, handing me the earphone from the recording machine. She turned on the machine and I heard a squeaky voice saying, "I was astonished that this man who seems to be some kind of goddam—*excuse me*—minor employee in an office of an oil company, lives in a large private house, and a private house five stories high, in midtown Manhattan, for God's sake—*excuse me*. Maybe he's a vice-president of a large company; if so, this ought to be stated. Maybe his wife has money, but, even so, would he be working in a goddam—*excuse me*—minor job? I don't know the answer, but this is an important point and must be clarified, for only substantial people have private houses in this goddam—*excuse me*—town. Hell—*excuse me*—even I can't afford to own a house in this ------- city. *Excuse me*. Four. I suggest this pronoun *his* seems to be a very large sort of dining-room. If he owned a private house would he likely. . . ."

"I'm going to take this record home", the secretary said. "He's a riot."

SOON AFTERWARDS, back in the office-boys' room, I would be asked by one of the office-boys how things had gone with Ross: did he complain about the pencils? did he throw any manuscripts on the floor? did he tell me how much he wanted to be someone else? did he blast the people who were responsible for the minute mistakes that had appeared in the previous week's issue? did he tell me to leave? did I leave? After we had taken Mr Ross apart in this manner, and after we had shared the common gossip about who had come in with a hangover and how soon would the newest Vassar typist leave, I proceeded to make my rounds of the offices to see what I could hear in the way of news. If I could, I always tried to get

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away from the office as much as possible, for I could travel about the city, delivering and picking up manuscripts and galley sheets and books from editors and writers who hadn't come in that day; and calling on the artists, including Peter Arno and Helen Hokinson, whose art work I brought back to *The New Yorker*'s offices in a taxi.

Another of my duties was picking up opening-night tickets for Mr Ross at the different theatres. I felt very important indeed when I'd step up to a ticket-window and hand a letter, with money enclosed, to a sallow, suspicious woman whose cheeks were invariably blotched by Valentines of rouge. I would ask for the letter back after I had been given my tickets; a typical letter read:

> Broadhurst Theater,
> West 44th Street,
> New York, N.Y.
>
> Dear Sirs: Please deliver to bearer two opening-night tickets for BURNING BRIGHT, which you are holding in the name of Harold W. Ross. Thank you.

Sometimes I even had the elated suspicion that the ticket-seller, glaring at me, believed that I was Mr Ross. In his office, Mr Ross would say: "You're sure they're the right tickets, son?" I was sure. "Did you check the dates?" Yes, I had; opening night, yes, sir. "Did you check the numbers? Are the seats next to each other?" Yes, I had checked the numbers. "Did you get the right amount of money, son, no change?" Yes, sir; no, sir. "Well, thanks a lot, son. Another lousy goddam play. My wife likes to go to them. God knows why."

EVERY FEW MONTHS OR SO James Thurber would come to the city and stay across the street at the Algonquin Hotel, where the memory of the Round Table has been perpetuated as assiduously as King Arthur's. Mr Thurber's eyesight, even then, was none too good, and although he was able to travel about the office by himself, Mr Ross did not want to lose him crossing 44th Street, so I was sent to fetch him.

One afternoon, Mr Ross told me to bring Mr Thurber to the offices. I went to the Algonquin and asked the room clerk to ring up Mr Thurber and tell him that a man from *The New Yorker* was ready to come up in the elevator and take him to Harold Ross. The room clerk said that he believed that the Thurbers had gone out, but just a minute, he'd ring them and find out. A moment later, he said, "No answer. They're out. Maybe." I went into the dining-room, then I went to the bar; no James Thurber. I rang them myself and got no answer. I went back to the office and reported to Mr Ross that James Thurber couldn't be located.

"Goddammit", Mr Ross said. "You've lost Thurber."

Mr Ross picked up the phone and called the Thurbers. "Not in? I tell you they are in. Tell Thurber he *is* in. He just called me. . . ." Mr Ross held the phone away from his mouth and said to me, "I can't find anybody." Then, "What did you say? All right. All right. Thanks." He hung up and said, "Thurber's at the Marguery. You know where that is, son? Did I say he was at the Algonquin?"

I hurried over to the Marguery on Park Avenue and found Mr Thurber finishing lunch. "Mr Ross has been looking for you", I said. On the way back to the office in the taxi, Mr Thurber talked of dialectical materialism.

When we were in Mr Ross's office, Mr Thurber said, "Here I am, Ross."

Mr Ross said, "I thought we'd lost you, Thurber. The goddam office-boys around this place—excuse me, son—haven't lost a writer yet, but they will one day, I'm sure of that. Thanks, son. Thurber, this boy is the best pencil-sharpener I've ever had." Ross introduced us. Thurber said that was nice to know, and then I went to other duties.

BECAUSE I SERVED MR ROSS more than any other office-boy, and because I did have a few acquaintances on the staff, I was often invited into someone's office to chat about the weather and what was new with Harold Ross and had I seen any of his comments on a story which a writer might have submitted to the magazine. A large part of my education on *The New Yorker* came from reading Ross's notes and opinions—as well as all the other editors'—on the various articles and stories, art work and poetry that were being processed up and down the editorial chain-of-command. In fact, I knew almost all the gossip that pertained to the 19th and 20th floors.

I soon discovered that there were many different types of writers; and that a writer was typed and pigeon-holed as if he had been performing a chore on a production line. For instance, many of the new "Talk of the Town" reporters had higher aspirations, which became apparent a few weeks after they joined the magazine. In their spare time some of them would turn out stories, which were referred to as "casuals", and which they submitted to the fiction editors. If none of their stories were accepted, but their "Talk" pieces were acceptable, Ross never knew of their "literary" aspirations, and they were safe from his ire. But if they did write a few casuals which were published in the magazine, the writer was called to Ross's office and asked, "What are you? Are you a reporter or a writer? You can't be both."

Ross did not praise them for their casuals, but looked at these stories with apprehension. The younger "Talk' reporters to whom this had happened confided to me in a state of nervous shock: I told them not to worry. One day Mr Ross was reminiscing with his fiction editor, Gustave Lobrano—and I was waiting to pick up a folder from Mr Ross in his office—when Mr Ross, referring to a famous poet and contributor to his magazine, said, "He can't think. That's why he's a poet. They can't think, you know."

ANOTHER TIME when I was in his office, he was reading a letter from a famous writer who had emigrated to this country from Eastern Europe and who was contributing stories about his European childhood to *The New Yorker*. "Goddam", Ross said, "the son-of-a-bitch wants to write a series of articles about his early years in America, for God's sake. I don't want any goddam foreigners writing about America."

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Another writer's work was judged by Mr Ross: ". . . not good but I suppose we ought to take it so as to encourage the writer to give us more stuff." Mr Ross's wife used to send in contributions—some of which I would pick up at their apartment—and they would subsequently appear in "Talk of the Town". I had literary aspirations myself, but I never knew before my employment on the magazine that one was either a reporter or a writer, and that one could not be both and hope to succeed on Mr Ross's magazine.

As I GRADUALLY BECAME a firmer member of the staff, I began to serve Mr Ross in a variety of ways. Early one morning I was called to his apartment. He opened the door and appeared to be in great pain. He asked me if I had had breakfast: Yes, sir, I answered. He then said that was nice, and opening his mouth like Joe E. Lewis before a camera, he took out a partial plate and handed it to me. "Goddammit", he said, "this is a new plate and it hurts me." He showed me where it hurt and said the plate had to be filed down. I was instructed to go immediately to his dentist's office and have the work done while I waited, and to bring the plate back to the office as soon as it was ready.

I took Mr Ross's false teeth and put them in my coat pocket.

"Don't carry them there", he said. "You might lose them. Put them in your shirt pocket."

"I'm sorry, Mr Ross", I answered. "I have no shirt pocket."

"What kind of goddam shirt is that?" he asked. "Don't they make shirts with pockets any more?"

"It's a Brooks Brothers shirt", I said, "and their shirts don't have any pockets."

"Goddam", he said. "Well, try not to lose them." He glared at me like a Hallowe'en pumpkin, spitting firelight.

When I arrived at the dentist's office, I gave the plate to the receptionist and asked to speak to the dentist.

"He's busy now, and he has appointments scheduled all day."

"But I have Harold Ross's teeth", I said. "He needs them in a hurry."

"I'm sorry", she said, "but people who need work done on their teeth make appointments five months in advance."

"What happens if it's an emergency?" I asked. "A toothache."

"We handle emergencies different", she said.

"Well, these are Harold Ross's teeth and he's suffering great pain", I said.

"From a toothache?" she said.

"Yes", I said.

"If his tooth hurts, why isn't he here himself?"

"He's too busy", I said. "Besides, it's one of the teeth on the plate." I showed her where it needed filing down.

I asked her if I might see the dentist. I wanted to explain to him how necessary it was for Harold Ross to get his teeth back right away.

"Is Harold Ross the editor of *The New Yorker*?" she asked.

I nodded.

"Well, I'll see what we can do. Wait just a minute." She went into the dentist's office, where a blonde woman was groaning under a drill. The receptionist spoke to the dentist and he stopped working on his patient's teeth and looked at Mr Ross's. Then he looked at me.

The receptionist came out and said we could have them the next morning. I said I would be back the next morning to pick them up.

"Where are my goddam teeth?" Mr Ross roared.

"They'll be ready in the morning", I said.

"Did you tell them whose teeth they were? *Mine*."

I nodded.

"Goddam", he said. "I've got to go out to dinner tonight. At the Indian Ambassador's. What am I going to do?"

I left.

The next morning I got his teeth very early and brought them up to his apartment; he was wearing his pajamas, and he grabbed his plate, chomped it into his mouth, glared at me, and shut the door in my face.

MANY INVITATIONS CAME to the office, to attend off-Broadway operas and plays, book-launching parties, chamber music concerts, press conferences for radio and television celebrities, and other events which escaped classification. The invitations often filtered down from the writer or reviewer who had been invited to the other members of the staff. Since I was accustomed to emptying IN and OUT baskets during the day, I was the recipient of many tickets (they always came in pairs) from the reviewers who had no intention of travelling to Brooklyn or Greenwich Village or even to Town Hall to cover the début of a new soprano or harpsichordist.

The printed opinion of an event in the pages of the magazine was, naturally, a highly-prized triumph, and the appearance of *The New Yorker*'s critic on the scene made everyone's blood run faster. The magazine always received favoured seats, and when I sat down in one of them (perhaps with a date in the other), I was the recipient of tense, hopeful looks. Many of the events I went to were so far off Broadway that even I thought it was rather silly to be mistaken for Wolcott Gibbs and Winthrop Sargeant.

One time an invitation was received to attend the dedication of a new room at Carnegie Hall: cocktails would be served. I was given the invitation—an engraved one, too—and I called up a girl who was more interested in music than in me. She accepted with alacrity, and I arranged to meet her after work at the book publisher's office on Madison Avenue where she worked as a book-jacket designer.

"This is an interesting room", she said as we tried to find a waiter with *hors d'oeuvres*. "What is it?"

"I don't know", I answered. I looked at the engraved invitation. The name of the room was on it and I told her the name. "I wonder what it's for", she said.

A man was going around among the guests, introducing himself and trying to make everyone feel at home. When he came up to us and discovered that I was on *The New Yorker*, he said that a cousin of his had been the music critic on the

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magazine years ago. He asked me what I did on the magazine. I told him I was Ross's personal observer, not a reviewer, or a critic, but an observer. He said he didn't know that Harold Ross had one of those. I asked him the purpose of the room we were in. He turned his back on my date and said *sotto voce* that we were standing in the newly-decorated foyer of the Men's Room.

TELEVISION was relatively new in 1949 and 1950, and when one of the big radio programmes went over to television productions it was a major event. *The Voice of Firestone* decided to make this move, and for their opening show they had many of the trimmings of a play's first night. Two tickets came to *The New Yorker* in an envelope, with a letter to Mr Ross asking him to be certain to attend, as it would be a *First* and *an Event to be Remembered Years After*. Mr Ross decided that he had other plans for the evening, so on the afternoon of the show he asked me whether I would care to attend. I said I would, and he gave me the invitation. I then phoned a girl who was more interested in television than in me and asked her if she'd like to go to the première performance of *The Voice of Firestone* on television. She accepted with alacrity and asked me where I intended to take her to dinner before the show. We went to the Blue Mill in Greenwich Village. When we reached the television studio, an attendant asked me what I wanted. I said I had been invited to attend the evening's performance. He said, let's see your invitation. I handed him the invitation and he said:

"Yes, *sir*, please follow me!"

We followed him upstairs to the balcony. He lifted a velvet rope for us to go down to the first row where there were a number of people dressed formally, in dinner jackets and evening dresses. I was wearing a threadbare tweed coat with leather patches at the elbows, and a pair of messy grey trousers. We were directed to a pair of seats in a row of formally-dressed persons.

"So glad you could come", a giant of a man said, sawing the air with my arm. "We always read your magazine. It gets better as the years go on." I thanked him and said nothing the rest of the evening. The next morning Mr Ross asked me if I had enjoyed the show. I told him that I had and, furthermore, I had sat next to some people named Firestone. "Goddam", Mr Ross said.

MR ROSS DRESSED rather like a prospector who had just arrived in town from a winter's fur-trapping in Alaska, and who, reaching town, had put on a suit that had been packed in a duffle bag. One of his favourite hats reminded me of a soggy deflated football that someone had smashed down upon his head. It appeared to have once been a brown hat, though one could not be certain. On a rainy day and on a sunny day this hat seemed to have the texture of the hair of a Kodiak bear recently emerged from a winter's hibernation in the damp, dark well of a tree. It was not a hat that one expected the editor (or even an office-boy, for that matter) of *The New Yorker* to wear; but then no one, of course, would ever have guessed that the man beneath the soggy hat was Harold Wallace Ross, the editor-in-chief of the country's most sophisticated magazine.

Mr Ross seemed like an Old English Sheepdog with an ulcer. Sheepdogs are customarily phlegmatic and lovable; Mr Ross was neither. . . . But he looked like one. One rainy winter morning I met Mr Ross in his office, he with his soggy hat and damp raincoat, I with my half-pint of cream and cheese crackers.

"Good morning, Mr Ross", I said efficiently.

Mr Ross scowled.

"It's raining", I pointed out pleasantly.

"Jesus Christ", he said. "Son, you notice everything."

I poured his cream into a glass and opened his crackers. He hung up his coat but brought his hat to his desk and set the hat down in front of the sharpened pencils. Mr Ross stared at his hat. He picked it up and looked inside it, then set it down again. "Goddam, it isn't that *large*."

"No, sir", I answered.

"Some *so-and-so* last night said I had the largest head he'd ever seen. I want you to take this hat and find out what size it is. I don't know the name of the machine that tells you, but you ought to be able to find one. Here."

He handed me his hat and I left the office.

WHEN I GOT TO the lobby of our building, I gave his hat a careful inspection. I noticed that it was a Cavanagh hat, so I decided to go to the Cavanagh Hat Shop on Park Avenue, a block down from the Waldorf-Astoria. I didn't have a raincoat and although his hat was already wet I didn't want it to become wetter, so I placed Mr Ross's hat in my armpit, like a football, and rushed over to the hat shop.

"What can we do for *you*?" a clerk asked me.

"I'd like to find out the size of this hat. I understand you have a machine that tells you the size of a hat."

"Well, sonny, all I can tell you is that you'd better take *that* hat to the store where you bought it", the clerk said, looking distastefully at Mr Ross's hat.

"This hat was bought here", I said triumphantly, and added, "It doesn't belong to me."

"Here, let me see it", the clerk said, taking the hat away from me. "My God", he said, looking inside Mr Ross's hat. "It *is* ours."

"It is", I said.

The clerk called to the other men in the store to come and see the hat. They passed it around, muttering in disbelief. "It must be twenty years old", one of them said, wiping his hands on his handkerchief after he gave it to the next man. "Or a hundred", the next man said. "We don't have one of those machines, there's a technical name for them, but we don't have one", said the clerk who had originally waited on me. "But I think the company should buy it back, retire it, if only to get it off the streets."

"This hat belongs to Harold Ross", I said.

"Of *The New Yorker*?" the clerk asked, incredulously.

"Yes", I said proudly.

"Well, I believe you can find one of those machines at

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Knox's on Fifth Avenue. You know where it is—on the other side of the Public Library. And tell Mr Ross it's time he bought a new hat."

I thanked him and hurried through the miserably cold rain over to Knox's. Once there, I found that they did indeed have such a machine, and it measured Mr Ross's hat size: seven and seven-eights. Mr Ross's hat was passed around again, with awe and disbelief. I wrote the size down on a piece of paper, thanked the clerks at Knox, and left the store. Outside, the rain increased in intensity and I was soon soaked.

I returned immediately to Mr Ross's office and told him the size of his hat. "Son, you're awfully wet", he said. "Don't you have a raincoat?" I told him that I didn't. My overcoat was at the cleaners. Mr Ross took out his wallet and gave me two ten-dollar bills. I was so stunned that I could say nothing as I saw what was happening. "Buy yourself a raincoat. And you'd better dry off now. Somehow. Before you go out again." I wanted to protest and Mr Ross noticed it. "I said buy yourself a raincoat, goddammit, and I mean it." I thanked him and went back to the office-boys' room. I didn't mention his gift to anyone. As soon as I was warm again, I went up to Spalding's and, adding a few dollars of my own, I bought myself a raincoat which I wore with much pride.

ABOUT SIX MONTHS AFTER I started working on *The New Yorker* I began attending the weekly art meetings. Cartoons, covers, and spot drawings which the art editor, James Gerraghty, thought publishable, were held up on a board for Harold Ross's inspection. I held up the artwork. Tuesday mornings were spent arranging the artwork in a conference room on the 19th floor, in the sequence in which I was to show them to Mr Ross. After lunch a jury—consisting usually of Harold Ross, Mr Gerraghty, Mr Gustave Lobrano, the fiction editor (who was considered by Mr Ross to have impeccable taste), Rea Irvin, who drew the first cover of the magazine (Eustace Tilley inspecting a butterfly through a monocle) and an elderly female secretary who was accustomed to taking Mr Ross's notes down in dictation at these weekly meetings—entered the art meeting-room one after another. When everyone was seated, Mr Ross picked up a musician's baton, waved it in the air, growled, pointed it at me, and said, "Put the work up, son." Occasionally I was too slow, and sometimes I was too fast; but after a few meetings I managed to judge the tempo of the required changes by the look in Mr Ross's eye.

At one meeting shortly after I began this duty, I placed a cover by Mary Petty on the board in front of Mr Ross. (Everyone sat at a long table facing me.) Mr Ross looked at it, talked about his lunch with Mr Gerraghty; then he pointed his baton at the cover, the upper left-hand corner, and looked at Mr Irvin.

"What's that goddam colour, Irvin?" Mr Ross asked.

Mr Irvin looked at the cover and lit his cigar. He blew out a cloud of smoke after it was properly lighted and said, "That colour? That colour's purple."

Mr Ross said, "Well, we need some more of that colour."

Mr Gerraghty told the secretary to make a note of it.

After the meetings were over, and the artwork had been inspected and decisions had been made, Mr Ross used to ask one of the men to stay with him a few minutes. Mr Ross would lean back in his chair, pull out his suspenders by his thumbs, and reminisce, more often than not, about his early days on the magazine and in New York. He would also talk about his artists and writers. I would purposely move slowly about the job of getting the artwork ready to move back up to the 20th floor; in that way I could listen to Mr Ross and also make it appear that I was doing my job.

One spring afternoon I put a cartoon of golfers on the board.

"There are too many goddam clubs, aren't there?" Mr Ross asked. He waited for an answer.

"I don't believe there are", Mr Gerraghty answered, counting them aloud. "No, there aren't too many. It's all right."

"Something's wrong with it", Mr Ross said. "Check it."

The cartoon showed two caddies standing on the green, one holding the pin in back of the cup. They each had a bag of clubs slung over their shoulders.

I started to take the cartoon away, and put another in its place, but Mr Ross said, "Bring it back, son."

I replaced it on the board.

"Is the caddy allowed to go on the green with a golf-bag?" he asked.

Nobody answered him.

Then I did. "No, sir", I said, to everyone's surprise. "A caddy is definitely not supposed to carry his bag on the green. At any time." Then I added, "I'm pretty certain of that."

"Have you caddied?" Mr Ross asked me.

"Yes, sir", I said. "I used to caddy for a former National Open Champion. Lew Worsham. I'm from Bethesda, Maryland, near the Burning Tree Country Club, where Worsham used to be the pro, before he won the championship."

"Did you ever caddy for him in tournaments?" Mr Ross asked.

"No", I said.

"Well, this needs checking", he said. He waved his baton at me and I put another drawing on the board.

"THERE ARE TOO GODDAM MANY cars parking illegally in this town", Mr Ross told me one day the following winter.

"Yes, sir", I said.

"I'm going to do something about it."

"Yes, sir."

"I want you to go out every Friday afternoon and count illegally parked cars. Here's a sheet you can fill out, with their licence numbers, time of day, make of car. By God, if I have to go to court I'll have the proof. These things have to be double-checked."

Every Friday afternoon for the next three months I counted illegally parked cars in mid-town Manhattan. And every Thursday I saw the results of my investigations published in the magazine, in "Talk of the Town". Invariably they appeared in the following form:

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Weekly count of illegal parking of automobiles on a couple of non-parking blocks

BLOCKS INSPECTED: *Fifty-first Street from Fifth to Seventh Avenues*
TIME OF INSPECTION: *3.25 to 3.35 p.m. last Friday*
NUMBER OF CARS ILLEGALLY PARKED: *28.*

Counting cars one Friday afternoon on West 58th Street, from Sixth to Fifth Avenues, I noticed a policeman on the corner of Fifth watching me as I wrote down a licence number on my clipboard. I put the clipboard down by my side and walked nonchalantly up Fifth Avenue, hoping that he would have forgotten about me by the time I reached the corner. When I got there, however, he said, "What are you doing?" I told him, without breaking my stride or looking directly at him, that I was counting cars that were parked illegally. The policeman said, "Why?"

"For Harold Ross", I called back, and then I ducked into Bergdorf Goodman where I spent the next half-hour looking at the new dresses. When I felt the coast was clear, I went outside and hurried down Fifth Avenue back to my office. I told Mr Ross what had happened. "Don't get caught", he said.

I BEGAN HANDING IN STORIES and short casuals for publication shortly after I had been with *The New Yorker* for a year. Every now and then one of my pieces went up two or three rungs of the editorial ladder and then usually received a final *no* from Mrs Katharine White or Mr Henderson.

I wrote a short piece called, "Let's Legalize Gambling, Mother, It Isn't Cold Up Here Yet", which concerned a young man who, in lieu of writing home to his mother in Maryland, used to go by a man-in-the-street television show on Madison Avenue every few days and wave at the camera. The young man's mother had her set tuned on to this programme down in Maryland. One day the young man was interviewed on the programme and the topic of discussion that day concerned Mayor O'Dwyer's proposal to legalise gambling in the State of New York. In a recent letter the young man had been asked by his mother why he wasn't wearing a new scarf which his mother had knitted for him. When the young man was asked by the interviewer what he thought of the Mayor's proposal, he answered, "His proposal is sound. It isn't cold up here yet. I'm all for it." The young man managed to answer many unanswered letters by this double-talk as he was interviewed. When he wasn't questioned, he nevertheless managed to walk by the camera and then he would stop and wave at his mother in Maryland to let her know he was all right.

This piece went from one editor's OUT basket to another's IN—with comments that suggested it would be pleasant to have it appear in the magazine. It went to Mr Henderson, and then to Mrs White. Then it went to Mr Lobrano, and finally to Mr Ross. He liked it and it was published in the magazine. The office-girls and many of the staff writers, including Niccolo Tucci, Peter De Vries, A. J. Liebling, and the editor of the Fact department, Mr William Shawn, told me that they thought it was very good. I felt that I was now a writer.

On the Monday after its appearance Mr Ross called me to his office. I expected that I would receive some recognition and possibly a promotion.

I entered his office and he scowled at me. "What did you say your name was, son?"

I told him.

He stared at me a few moments. "You're a goddam writer", he said, in the tone of a man whose best friend has failed him. "Goddam."

THE NEXT DAY another office-boy was asked to Mr Ross's office to do his errands. I was not asked to serve him again, and when, a few days later, the duty of getting Mr Ross his morning cream and cheese crackers was taken away from me, I decided that I no longer had a future on *The New Yorker*, and I resigned from the staff and left New York.

A Flea on Bardolph's Nose

At first I thought it was a fly
stirring the darkness, a late-night
bloated warm day refugee,
the kind that jamjars in the house
long past the weather's change and then
cripples to raisin and is gone.

In fact my senses played the fool
being drubbed by booze, the hour and bed.
The buzzing was the motion of
my baby's sleep-suit as it rasped
across my naked thigh, while to
and fro I steadied him from tears.

Then looking into the pursed face
asleep in moonlight, four a.m.,
I came to, incandescently.
It was as if I'd witnessed yet
again the moment of the birth.
My senses soaked a second then

light slipped away and darkness fell.
No flea on Bardolph's nose, no black
soul burning in its hell could be
more tortured by the itch of loss,
for most of Life 's mounting dark stairs,
footfall to step, head down, to bed.

Tony Roberts

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Can Gorbachov Change this System?

Language & Power in Soviet Society (II)

A Conversation between ALAIN BESANÇON *&* GEORGE URBAN

1. Can Alternative Cultures Survive?

URBAN: *In the first part of this conversation (*ENCOUNTER, *May) we discussed whether totalitarian ideology could corrupt and perhaps eliminate the uses of natural language—language used between the mother and her child or the greengrocer and his customer. We concluded that it probably could not.*

There is, of course, a monastic conception of Communism which frowns upon private feelings and loyalties because they distract from "revolution". This "kill-joy" Communism was much in evidence during the Cultural Revolution in China; but in the Soviet Union too it permeated for a long time the moral code of the Party. Much has been written about the fierce but chaste "apparatchik", not least by Milovan Djilas. The Party's objective was to breed a kind of human being who could say with sincerity: "I love dialectical materialism". . . .

BESANÇON: That was the utopian purpose, but it never worked. It is true that Russian Communism in its puristic forms is an austere creed; it is against pleasure; it frowns upon desire; it thinks highly of martyrdom and suffering. Here, too, we have a link with the kind of feeling expressed by Saltykov-Shchedrin in the 19th century. ("In Russia things are worse than they are here in France, but, in fact, they are better because we Russians suffer more.")

Chernyshevsky's hero Rakhmetov (in his novel of 1883, *What's to be Done?*) is perhaps our best example of that 19th-century socialist/scientific asceticism which Plekhanov and then Lenin and the Bolsheviks took for their model; and this too is where the Communist idea of the "New Man" had its beginnings (Chernyshevsky's book carried the subtitle *A Tale of the New Men*).

Rakhmetov finds himself (accidentally) falling in love. This could not be allowed: "I must curb this love: it will tie my hands. They are already tied and they will not easily be undone. But I will manage it. I must not love. . . ." Rakhmetov loves humanity; what he cannot stand is people.

> **"I do not touch a drop of wine. I never touch a woman. . . . It must be so. We are asking for a total enjoyment of life for men, and our lives must bear witness that we do not ask it to gratify our own private desires, that it is not for us, but for men in general."**

In other words, the repudiation of personal relations and natural language is to some extent rooted in Russia's intellectual past.

—In distancing themselves from that heritage some East European dissidents have chosen the indirect approach. They remain vaguely within the Marxist—though not the Leninist—universe and use its language. They seem to think that their only chance of reforming the system is from within, much in

ALAIN BESANÇON *is the Director of L'Ecole des hautes études in Paris, where he teaches Russian history. His publications include "The Confusion of Tongues" (1978), "The Soviet Syndrome" (1978), "The Intellectual Origins of Leninism" (1981), "The Falsification of the Good" (1985), and other works on Soviet culture and society; his most recent book, "Une Génération", was published this spring by Julliard. He writes a regular column for "L'Express", and is the author of various articles in* ENCOUNTER, *including "The Decline of The Sage" (July-August 1986), To the Left of Mitterrand: The End of the Soviet Mirage" (July 1981), and "The View from East of Eden" (June 1980).*

GEORGE URBAN'S *contributions to* ENCOUNTER *include conversations with Galina Vishnevskaya (December 1986, January 1987), Max M. Kampelman (February 1985), Alexander Zinoviev (April 1984), Jeane Kirkpatrick (November 1983), Eugene V. Rostow (April 1983), Daniel Bell (February 1983), W. Averell Harriman (November 1981), Zbigniew Brzezinski (May 1981), Leszek Kolakowski (January 1981), and Milovan Djilas (December 1979).*

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the same way as the early Humanists went on using the vocabulary of the medieval Church while expressing ideas that were more and more hostile to the tenets of orthodoxy. Can you see the categories and language of Marxism so employed as to lead to a serious critique and then, perhaps, to the withering away of the system? Marxism being destroyed by the weapons of Marxism? Something of that sort did happen in Hungary in 1956 and Prague in 1968.

BESANÇON: That would be choosing the difficult path with uncertain results, though it may, under certain conditions, be the only one available. The clean way is to turn one's back on the whole corrupting climate of ideology.

That is why I admire Vladimir Bukovsky. He took the conscious decision that it was not enough to be a dissident and an émigré. He took up biology as a hard science because he knew that the habit of mind that goes with scientific enquiry would immunise him against ideology more effectively than any "counter-ideology". Marxism as a "science" is bogus; biology is not. To become a biologist you have to study the books, learn to respect evidence, subject your thinking to a rigorous logic, and so on. You cannot make deductions from a "general system", as you do in Marxism, without making yourself the laughing-stock of your peers.

Bukovsky's way is the honourable way and the only one that can be really effective. The Poles under *Solidarity* acted in the same manner. They did not attempt to harness the Party or the ideology to their own ends (although they exploited the weaknesses of both) but decided to renounce the ideology and articulate an alternative system of values and culture.

THE IDEA THAT *the Central and East European nations can live outside the grip of ideology while accepting the system as an evil they are powerless to destroy is now prevalent not only in Poland but also in Hungary, and to a smaller extent East Germany and Czechoslovakia too. This is a remarkable development in that it is based on the premise that Soviet ideology has totally failed to penetrate the consciousness of the people. In Hungary, for example, writers like István Csurka (recently reprimanded by the Government) advocate a state of affairs in which the nation would raise, out of its own and uncontaminated resources, a parallel culture, a parallel system of education, a parallel code of values, and so on. These would not directly challenge the official ideology but rather lead a life of their own outside the reach of the ideology. Can this opting out of the system succeed?*

BESANÇON: The premise of an alternative society and an alternative culture is no longer a premise—it is a fact. I never cease making the point that there is no such thing as "socialist" society or "Soviet" society. What you have is "the Communist domination of the remnants of normal society". "Socialist" society is a projection of ideology.

The pressures of Communist domination can, and often do, reduce the remains of normal society to the individual; but this individual can retain his identity, his human decency, and even regain some ground if the circumstances are right. In Poland and Hungary some of the circumstances are right at the moment. Hence I regard the notion of an alternative society and culture as right and realistic *within* certain strictly circumscribed limits to which I will come in a moment.

But there are differences even between Poland and Hungary. In Poland there is a deep gap between real society and the Communist world. The two are hardly in contact. Poland is, in fact, a country under the occupation of its own Communist Party. In Hungary the gap between society and government is not quite so crass. Hungarian society is more corrupt than the Polish; at the same time the Hungarian Communist Party is less hidebound than the one in Poland. But, as I say, the conditions for an alternative society and culture exist in both.

What are these conditions? In Poland a strong Church, independent farming and a wholly Western cultural tradition have supplied the basic requirements for a self-contained national society and culture. In Hungary the opportunities are more restricted. The Church, with the Primate of Esztergom at its head, does not enjoy the same prestige or independence as the Polish Church. The non-conformist Catholic "Basis Communities" under Father Bulányi have a wide following. There is no private farming, and the lure of cultural cooperation with the régime has been stronger than in Poland. At the same time, the Party has shown a greater readiness for compromise and made the ideology perform some spectacular somersaults, not least in the economy. "Privatisation" and running a stock exchange in a "socialist" country do not immediately come to mind as inevitable parts of the programme of Marxism-Leninism.

—You said an alternative society and culture are realistic things to aim for within limits. Before asking you to say how you see those limits, let me quote a passage from one of Csurka's speeches in which he sets out the rationale for an alternative Hungarian culture.

> **"Recognising that the Hungarian people, relying on its own strength, is unable to change the world's power-relationships, Hungary's geographical position or even the domestic facts of power, we must work out a life-strategy for Man grown independent from the world of politics. We must work out the principles of conduct for that industrious, malleable, reliable citizen who does not question power and authority and does not, consequently, induce the authorities to take nervous and fear-inspired actions of violence, but does, rather, define entirely by himself his inner autonomy, his life-style and the scope of his individual existence. His resistance to pressures threatening him from all sides will not emphasise the act of resistance but rather the fact that he will simply live his own, autonomous, self-constructive life to the extent this is possible in the given framework. . . . This self-constructive programme has to be emphatically Hungarian . . . it has to be permeated by love. . . ."**

Does this strike you as practicable under Soviet rule?

BESANÇON: Well, it is a curious declaration. It's a very Lu-

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theran type of declaration, leaving the business of the world to the Prince of the secular world while relegating everything else to the private conscience of the individual. It is a highly apolitical declaration, too, in trying to build a society without its political dimension. It would strike a Plato or an Aristotle as an impossible undertaking; and I think it *is* impossible.

Of course, we must not dismiss it as meaningless, for it *is* a programme of escape from ideology. But the idea of leaving the city of the world to the Prince of the world—so that you can save your soul by building a decent, clean, and free inner world—is sheer escapism. The Poles under *Solidarity* tried a similar formula—a self-liberated, autonomous, clean Polish society was somehow to live side by side with a political régime that was neither free, nor autonomous, nor Polish. It cannot be done. Society is a whole thing. You cannot excise the political dimension and still say it is an autonomous and decent society.

—But aren't Poles and Hungarians past masters at doing just that? Their experiences from the last century are not so difficult to transfer to this one, even though all the conditions are outwardly different. The Hungarians, for example, had to learn the art of supporting a "parallel culture", writing in Aesopian language, etc., between the defeat of the 1848-49 Revolution and the 1867 Compromise. They learnt how to ignore, tame, and then absorb the forces of oppression. It may well be that those who advocate a parallel society in Hungary today have, subconsciously perhaps, Ferenc Deák and the 1867 model in mind. Revolution has been tried—absorption remains to be tested.

BESANÇON: I am sure you are not serious about the parallel. Austrian oppression was a veritable delight in comparison with the Soviet type of controls that have kept Hungary in place for four decades. It left the structure of society and the minds of individuals untouched. The *ancien régime* was built on the theory that State and Society were separate. The State took care only of those problems which Society itself could not take care of: defence, jurisdiction, law and order and the like. But the Habsburgs would have been horrified if anyone had suggested that they install a totalitarian order in Hungary. They would not have understood what you were talking about.

—You don't seem to believe that the Polish-Hungarian "programme" for an alternative society has a future.

BESANÇON: It will be a close thing. No matter how modestly you define the area in which individual men and women preserve their autonomy, the clash with the surrounding "Soviet reality" will be inevitable and continuous. At every turn there will be conflicts; compromises will have to be struck, and these will undermine much of the essence of the desired alternatives.

—One curious feature of the Soviet type of oppression is the enthusiasm which not only its servants and administrators, but its victims, too, are expected to show for it. You lose your freedom as a practising Christian or Uzbek patriot, but you are expected to enjoy and celebrate your new status because it represents, according to the ideology, a higher form of liberty. "Freedom is Slavery"—as George Orwell puts it in "1984".

That kind of mentality would not, as you rightly imply, tolerate alternative cultures and societies; and it may well be that it is premature to draw conclusions from the incipient Polish and Hungarian models.

BESANÇON: I think it is, even though both are most desirable. Soviet ideology absolutely demands that the citizen should go beyond the correct use of language and celebrate the triumph of the system with street dancing, bands, choruses and other manifestations of officially engineered euphoria. It is expected of him to show that the pseudo-reality which surrounds him *is* reality.

An historian friend of mine remarked to me the other day that he could not understand certain things about the Soviet annexation of Estonia. He said: once the invasion of Estonia had been decided, the oppression of the country was wicked but understandable, the faked plebiscite was wicked but understandable. But why the happy gatherings to celebrate all these terrible events? Why the music and the girls in folk costume?

This is, of course, where ideology comes in. Soviet policy is a totalitarian policy; it cannot allow reality to intrude. If the Soviets said the Estonians had been liberated and joined the USSR of their own free will, then the Estonians have to show that this is exactly what they had done, never mind the truth. The Soviets need the Estonian dancers to prove Soviet legitimacy. That is why I do not believe that alternative societies and cultures have much of a future under Soviet suzereinty. I hope events will prove me wrong; but if so, something fundamental will have happened to the Soviet system.

WHEN PRESIDENT REAGAN pointed to the Soviet system as the "focus of evil" in the world, was he, in your opinion, thinking of this massive cultivation of the Lie as the principal element of "evil"? And why was it that the Soviets got so upset by what amounted to a fairly harmless quip in an old polemic?

BESANÇON: I was present when the President made that remark, and I was struck by the truth it expressed and the simple way in which the President put it. Reagan has been mocked and abused for his formula but I believe his statement went to the heart of Communist rule. No one has yet given us a more graphic, stripped-down definition of what the Soviet system is about. "Focus of evil" is a philosophically perfect formulation.

—I was once asked after a lecture what I thought about the President's remark, and I said it expressed a profound truth in the sense that all Communist doctrine was based on the idea of the class-struggle and that involved the institutionalisation of hatred. There could hardly be a greater evil, I observed, than the elevation of hatred as the governing principle of society.

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BESANÇON: I would go even further. It is certainly true that Soviet ideology converts a vice—hatred—into a virtue, and celebrates it. This is bad enough, for it has been used to justify the killing of millions of peasants in the Ukraine in the early 1930s, Stalin's Great Terror, and all the other horrors in Moscow's genocidal history.

But the core of the evil Reagan spoke about goes even deeper because it amounts to the reversal of our entire sense of values and the demolition of reality itself. It is a general attack on everything civilised man has been brought up to believe was of good report and decent intention.

You've asked: Why did the Soviets get so upset about Reagan's "harmless quip"? This is the reason. For the Soviet leaders, "focus of evil" wasn't a harmless quip at all. It meant unmasking the lie about Soviet rule in three simple words with the authority of the President of the United States of America. Mr Reagan touched the exposed nerve of Soviet reality.

Dr Kissinger in Moscow (II)

THE THEORY **of *glasnost*—or openness—may well be based on the misconception, which comes naturally to a Leninist, that there is only one truth.**

But left to their own devices, men and women tend to reach contradictory conclusions from the same body of facts. Eventually that tendency toward pluralism is likely to oblige the new Soviet leadership to choose between Western-style democracy and repression. When confronting this choice in the past, Communist leaders have always opted for repression.

In the euphoria engendered by the new style of Soviet leadership, there has been a deafness to explicit Soviet statements emphatically rejecting any intention of moving toward a market economy or any kind of Western democracy. True, our Soviet hosts expressed grave doubts about the efficacy of central planning, but they were equally emphatic on the need to retain its key features.

THIS *reflects the realities of the Soviet system. What would be the function of the Communist Party if there were no central planning? And what leader who owes his eminence to the communist system—as is the case with Gorbachov and all his colleagues—can imagine a communist state without a dominant Communist Party? In short, the Soviet Union is a totalitarian state today and it will be a totalitarian state even after the reforms are completed, albeit a somewhat more benign one.*

THE NEW SOVIET REFORM **program has unleashed the perennial nostalgia of the democracies for seeking salvation in a conversion of the Soviet system to Western values.**

If they succeed in the objective of making their country stronger—without changing the foreign policy that produced current tensions—the democracies will in the long run be less secure.

I am not suggesting that the West has an interest in the failure of Gorbachov's experiment. Rather it cannot gear its foreign policy to a Soviet domestic program, however attractive. The only Soviet leader who did not die in office was also the principal reformer. Khrushchev was overthrown by the Central Committee. He also carried out the most adventurous foreign policy, witness the Berlin crisis and the Cuban missile crisis.

It cannot be in the interest of the democracies to gamble on an international structure dependent on Soviet self-restraint.

I CONSIDER *the Reykjavik framework extremely disadvantageous. Two components of the Reykjavik framework—the zero option on medium-range missiles and the restrictions on SDI—are in effect unilateral concessions on our part. The removal of American and Soviet medium-range missiles from Europe leaves unimpaired the Soviet ability to devastate Europe with short-range missiles and ICBMs. It eliminates the American ability to retaliate from Europe. It thus magnifies European fears that America might not respond to a nuclear attack confined to Europe, much less to a conventional one. With such an agreement, the Soviet strategy to decouple the defense of Europe from that of the United States will gain momentum.*

THE REYKJAVIK FRAMEWORK **culminates in the relentless Soviet pressure to do away with SDI. I consider SDI a major contribution to Western strategy. In its absence, the West must rely on the Mutual Assured Destruction theory, which seeks deterrence through the devastation of civilian populations and industrial targets.**

This strategy has two huge handicaps: it leaves the democracies with no choice between surrender and suicide. And it imposes an unbearable psychological burden. For how long can democratic leaders tell their public that their security is based on leaving them naked to extermination? Faced with such prospects, pacifism and unilateral disarmament will sooner or later sap the will to defend the West.

THE ATTITUDE *of our European allies is hard to comprehend. It is confusing enough that they do not make explicit the grave reservations they have about the zero option. In addition, most of them actively seek to dissuade the Reagan administration from pursuing SDI. It takes more than uncertainty about SDI technology to explain why democratic leaders should prefer to leave their public undefended even against small-scale attacks, third-country strikes, and accidents. It is the triumph of a theory that exalts the fact of agreement over its substance. In the end it stakes everything on the escapist gamble that Gorbachov's reform program will render the Soviets benign.*

THE DEMOCRACIES ARE IN DANGER **of succumbing to self-induced emotional blackmail. Every Soviet proposal, however one-sided and however much a variation on the same theme, elicits pressures for some reciprocity. The practical consequence is to nudge the Western bargaining stance step by step toward the Soviet position.**

Henry Kissinger
in NEWSWEEK *(New York)*

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2. A Socialism that Never Was

Hopeful students of Soviet society have forecast the impending arrival of another alternative culture, too, one based on the culture of science. It has been said, for example, that scientists who deal with sophisticated intellectual problems in Novosibirsk will just not tolerate the blinkers imposed on them by a dated and primitive ideology. How can you work in research and high technology (it has been asked), and parrot at the same time the May Day slogans of the Communist Party? But in the real world of the Soviets the two do seem to be going together happily enough.

The successful coexistence of ideology and the exact sciences is not a good omen, and defies much we have been led to believe about human rationality since the Enlightenment. Do you feel an alternative culture based on science is any more likely to emerge than one based on the ordinary man's moral withdrawal from the contaminated world of "socialism"?

Besançon: No, I don't. The scientists and economists in Novosibirsk build excellent computers and think up bright new models for the Soviet economy. But the sophistication and scientific rigour needed in the pursuit of these activities have not affected their thinking to an extent that would have led them to repudiate the ideology. Certainly, they don't much like the gibberish they are asked to live by; certainly they don't enjoy the wooden language; but they realise that they have a *political* as well as a scientific career to make and cannot abstract themselves from ideology. Hence they toe the line. Solzhenitsyn felt the indignity of it all more than anyone else. In his letter to the Soviet leaders he pleaded: "Rule us despotically if you must, but please deliver us from ideology." As long as the Soviet system is what it is, Solzhenitsyn is asking for the impossible.

—All of which takes us back to an earlier question: at what point is the ideology most likely to crumble? You have poured cold water on my hope that we could draw up a set of conditions, the meeting of which would make it at least more likely that the ideology would collapse. Going by the 1956 Hungarian example, I would still maintain that the demise of ideology precedes the collapse of power. I regard it as pretty well proven that in Hungary the ideology expired the moment the infallibility of the Communist Party was publicly called in question. And it was called in question by at least three factors: Khrushchev's revelations of the "mistakes" of Stalin; the rehabilitation and reburial of László Rajk; and the Soviet acceptance of Gomulka. The Emperor stood naked, and everyone was saying so.

Besançon: I don't quite see it like that. Ideology collapses when Communist power collapses. Power and language are, to my mind, the same thing. When Rajk was reburied the régime was rehabilitating history; it was giving the lie to a whole vast fabric of misrepresentations (that Rajk had been Tito's agent, a spy, a stooge of imperialism, etc.). That fabric had been its title to power. When that was surrendered, and when Khrushchev surrendered to the truth at the Twentieth Party Congress, Communist power, Soviet-style, was given up *together* with the language. Or, if you like, ideology and language collapsed together with the legitimacy of Communist rule. The language of Communism *is* the power of Communism.

—But, to take the 1968 Czechoslovak example, there, too, the rebellion of Communist journalists and writers who made the Prague Spring was the cause of the collapse of Communist power, not its consequence. These writers were (if my interpretation is right) ahead of the rest of society; they were, literally, talking the Party out of power.

Besançon: I would say that the same men who had coined and used the official jargon began to sense the coming end of Communist power and adjusted their language accordingly. They began to speak with their own natural voices because power was collapsing around them. They were like Ulysses's companions (whom Circe's potions had changed into swine) shedding Circe's enchantment and changing back from their piggish bodies into human beings. I don't think we have to look further. The collapse of power is the necessary and sufficient condition of the collapse of ideology. The two are the same thing.

—Is it your view that in Poland, too, in the heyday of "Solidarity", the Party and the official ideology crumbled as two aspects of the same phenomenon?

Besançon: No, it is not. Members of the Party, whether "convinced" Communists or just opportunists and *apparatchiks*, knew that they had to hang together if they were not to hang separately. They had nowhere else to go. Equally important, *Solidarity*'s ideological stance was weak from the beginning. It could never find the courage to denounce the official lie totally and formally. It never dared to denounce "socialism" as such. *Solidarity*'s argument for not denouncing it was that it would have been "bad tactics" to do so under Soviet suzereinty, that nobody believed in "socialism" anyway, and that repudiating it would, therefore, have been of no importance.

This was a serious error. It disarmed some of the leaders of *Solidarity*, confused the issues, and disoriented the people.

The Church was in the unhappy position of trying to maintain a false symmetry between "Capitalism" and "Socialism". This too had a disorienting influence on *Solidarity*. The Church had, in fact, entered into a compromise with the régime from the very beginning; it did not repudiate that compromise during the *Solidarity* period but simply tried to make it more effective. For all these reasons the collapse of Communist power and ideology in Poland did *not* take place as it had done in Hungary or even Czechoslovakia in 1968—

—But could have done and was pretty close to doing so. . . .

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BESANÇON: Yes, and that is why it is an absolutely vital interest for any Communist system in power not to permit *any* loss of power, any "restoration of capitalism". For it is not the restoration of *capitalism* that the power-holders really fear, but the sudden discovery that socialism never existed—that the "building of socialism" had been a gigantic fraud all along.

—You seem to have left out of your calculations the strength of the Communist "Establishment"—people who have by now a vested interest in the régime and tend, therefore, to deceive themselves into believing that what they and the system are doing is morally right.

BESANÇON: The question of numbers and "believing in Communism" does not enter the picture. In the existing tradition, a Communist is he who is a member of the Communist Party—there is no other definition. And when that Party crumbles or collapses, as it did in Prague and Budapest, there is suddenly nothing left of Communism, whatever the interests and beliefs of the Establishment. And the Communist Party, any Communist Party of the Soviet type in Eastern Europe, can collapse at any time because it is built on sand.

I will not give hostages to fortune by speculating how and why Communist Parties might collapse in the future, and whether the coordination of their collapse in several countries is something Western governments ought to support. Let me just say that the Communist Parties' continuing battle to sustain their isolation from real society is encouraging. The Party knows and real society knows that one has nothing to do with the other.

—One of the most startling aspects of the Hungarian, Czechoslovak and Polish upheavals has been their almost complete lack of impact on the nations of the USSR. (Courageous individuals did, of course, respond and had to pay a price for it.) The Russian nation's reaction was, if anything, directly hostile to the aspirations of the Magyars, Czechs, Slovaks and Poles, while the minority nations were—with the exception of the untypical Balts—quiescent, or sufficiently so as to make no difference. We have recently gone over the grounds for this through the perceptive eyes of Galina Vishnevskaya[1] *and came to the conclusion that the ordinary Soviet person's reaction was simply: "If we can't have a better life, neither should they. . . ." Have you a more convincing explanation?*

BESANÇON: Well, again *pace* Solzhenitsyn, the explanation lies, alas, in Russian tradition. About 150 years ago the Marquis de Custine observed on his trip to Czarist Russia that the reverse side of the ordinary Russian's obedience at home was his aggressive imperialism abroad. "The kneeling slave", he wrote, "dreams of the domination of the world."

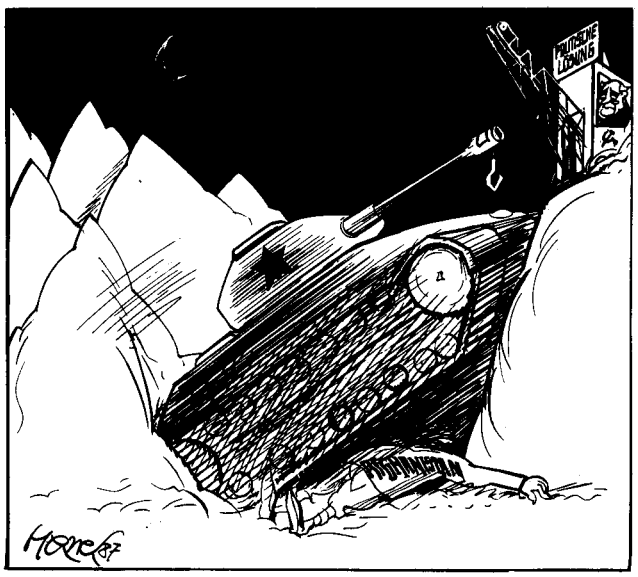
This is as true today as it was in the 1830s. The sad thing is that the ideological submission which the totalitarian system requires from you results in disgust with yourself. You despise yourself as a human being because you have not had the guts to say "*No*" to the system. And you revel in your own dishonour: "If I'm a son-of-a-bitch, well, then let me behave like a son-of-a-bitch!"—and you do!

I OBSERVE, LIKE YOU, *the continuity of the illiberal tradition in Russian-Soviet affairs. The most terrifying thing about the fate of the Russian dissidents is not their arrest and humiliation by the authorities (one expects that in the Soviet Union), but their almost total lack of support by the people. Men like Yuri Orlov were reviled and maltreated by their fellow-prisoners (as well as their official tormentors) for no reason other than the "outlandishness" of their human rights protest. And we now know from people close to Gorbachov in the Soviet hierarchy (Fedor Burlatsky, for example) that under Khrushchev the run-of-the-mill Soviet citizen had no sympathy with "de-Stalinisation"—indeed he went on supporting the ways of Stalin.*

There can be no question that Custine's description of the "kneeling slave" in 19th-century Russia was right because others made similar and even more prescient observations. Alexander Herzen wrote in 1851:

> **"Russia's future will be a great danger for Europe and a great misfortune for Russia if there is no emancipation of the individual. . . . I believe there is some justification for the fear of communism which the Russian government begins to feel: communism is the Russian autocracy turned upside down."**

Jules Michelet, the French historian, warned in 1871 that on Germany's eastern borders the Russians were clamouring for a place under the sun as a "young" nation whose appointment with history has now struck. With rare foresight he predicted a "socialist tyrant", a new-fangled Czar who would become a "Messiah of the serfs, a barbarous Messiah, terrible to Europe". It would have been hard to forecast more accurately



[1] See, in ENCOUNTER (December 1986, January 1987), Galina Vishnevskaya in conversation with George Urban.

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the fate that was to overtake Russia and much of Europe under Lenin and Stalin—

BESANÇON: . . . except by Karl Marx himself, who observed the same traits, and outbid both Custine and Michelet in his bitter condemnation of Russian despotism. In 1853 he forecast, quite accurately, the Iron Curtain that was to be imposed on Europe a hundred years later, notably the "annexation of Hungary, Prussia, Galicia".

But to come back to your question about the Russian people's lack of response to the Hungarian, Czech, and Polish upheavals: What can the Soviet system offer to the man-in-the-street if not a feeling that through the State and Communism he belongs to a powerful empire? This is the clue to his deafness to the call of revolution on the peripheries, and it was the clue to his support of Czarist Russian imperialism, too, about which Custine wrote.

HERE WE MUST, of course, note a fundamental difference between Soviet "Communism" and East European "Communism". For an East European citizen the Communist state is "their" state, not his. For a Russian, *faute de mieux*, the Communist state is "his" state. That state inspires fear in foreigners, and it is always agreeable to be feared if you have no other satisfactions in life. To be feared by the rest of the world is one satisfaction the ordinary Soviet citizen shares with his rulers. It constitutes a powerful bond between them.

What is more difficult to explain is the silence of most of the non-Russian nations and nationalities. Here one would have to do a case-by-case analysis which we cannot undertake in this conversation. Let it suffice to say that some of the smaller nations, especially the Estonians, the Latvians and the Lithuanians, regard themselves as simply occupied and are awaiting a favourable moment to regain their independence. They did take note of Hungary.

The Uzbeks are a large nation and an ancient civilisation who are conscious of being both, and of having bred men of the stature of Avicenna when the Russians were, so to speak, still in the trees. Unlike some of the smaller Central Asian peoples, the Uzbeks have, therefore, no cultural complex *vis-à-vis* the Russians. They expect their old empire to re-emerge unscathed from Soviet occupation and they comply with the demands of Moscow precisely because they are confident of their future.

The Ukraine is a different matter, and it is difficult for me to tell how much of a separate Ukrainian consciousness survives to sustain a fully separate nationhood. The Ukrainians' plight is a mixture of what befell the Poles in the 19th century and the Irish in the 18th. Their language has been pushed into the background and their culture ignored or suppressed. They did, incidentally, react to the 1968 Prague events and to some extent the Polish revolution, although our evidence is patchy.

The Ukrainians' special tragedy is that the conquest of the Ukraine was the condition of Russia's emergence as a great power. Without the grain, the minerals and manpower of the Ukraine, Russia might have achieved the status of, shall we say, Canada, but would never have attained that of a world power. This is not the place to review the ups and downs of Soviet nationalities' policy. Let me just say that the Kremlin's political and material investment in the Ukraine is so great that I, for one, cannot envisage the survival of Soviet power without its Ukrainian component.

—Haven't some of the Russian dissidents given us hope that in a post-Soviet dispensation the Russian nation would want to shed its colonial dependencies?

BESANÇON: Yes, Solzhenitsyn in particular observed that a post-Soviet Russia would have to permit the Ukraine to determine its own future. This is the one hopeful sign in an otherwise bleak picture even though it is not something for tomorrow or perhaps even for the day after. But it is something we ought to take note of because it represents a break in Russian national thinking, and may well betoken a future Russian national state that will be strong, at peace with itself and the world, but will not be an empire. Whether and how the "kneeling slave" syndrome will be overcome to pave the way for Solzhenitsyn's vision is one of the great questions of our time. That the 1956 Hungarian Revolution and the 1968 Prague events did not induce the Russian people to overcome it does not mean that it will not be overcome under a different constellation.

OBSERVERS OF THE SOVIET SCENE *tend to make the point that the state of the Soviet empire might be very different today if the various upheavals in Eastern Europe had coincided. In the last forty or so years there has been a rebellion or defection every ten or twelve years—in Yugoslavia in 1948, Hungary and Poland in 1956, Czechoslovakia in 1968 and Poland in 1980-82. To mark the 30th anniversary of the Hungarian Revolution (on 23 October 1986), we did see a coordinated declaration of solidarity with the heritage of the Hungarian Revolution by dissidents in Poland, East Germany, Czechoslovakia, and Romania, as well as, of course, Hungary itself. There were 125 signatories representing all shades of non-conformist opinion. Do you see this as an early indication that, the next time round, one explosion in the peripheries might lead to others?*

BESANÇON: Naturally, it would be most desirable if a rapid chain-reaction did set in; but I cannot quite see it happening. I do not, as a matter of fact, expect an *explosion* but rather an *implosion* in the Soviet empire, and that would happen in the country where the system is most vulnerable and absurd and invites the contempt of the people: the Soviet Union itself. It is ultimately in Moscow that the threat to the Soviet system is greatest.

The precondition for any effective change in the peripheries is an implosion in Moscow. We had a foretaste of that in 1956 when Khrushchev's destruction of the myth of Stalin resulted in the uprising in Hungary and a dramatic confrontation between the Soviet leadership and the Polish Communists in Warsaw. This sort of thing might happen again. I have

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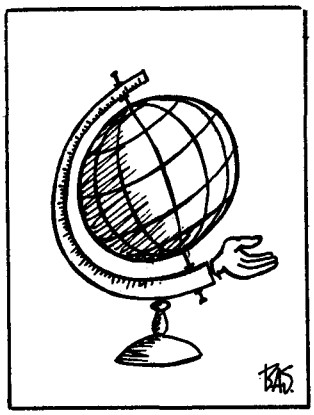
Dissidents Dissent



ARE **Gorbachov's new policies the turning-point we have been praying for, signalling the end of oppression and misery in the Soviet Union? Or are they a mere tactical retreat before the next offensive, as Lenin put it in 1921?**

The release of a number of human rights activists from prison, labour camps and exile during the past year is a welcome gesture but appears calculated to make a maximum public impression with minimum concessions. If the Kremlin is really undergoing a change of heart, why not declare a general amnesty for all prisoners of conscience? We still await a clear condemnation of the criminal use of psychiatry against dissidents. We have seen no progress on emigration.

THE SOVIET LEADERS *say they want to end the war in Afghanistan. If so, why not simply withdraw their troops? If the purpose of delay is to leave behind a stable government, why not allow free and fair elections under strict international supervision? We can only conclude that all they really want is the* **appearance** *of leaving Afghanistan.*

MOST PUZZLING OF ALL **is the new policy of *glasnost*, or openness. Many are bewildered to read in "Pravda" the very criticisms of Soviet reality that only a few years ago would have been branded as "anti-Soviet slander". But, to some extent, this policy makes a virtue of necessity: it has become senseless for the Kremlin to maintain a huge and costly internal propaganda machine whose products are believed by few.**

Real *glasnost* would involve genuine public debate in which all could take part without fear of punishment. Instead the party maintains its monopoly on the truth, the order being that for the moment truth must be critical of the régime. Such an order could be countermanded tomorrow.

CONSIDER *the posthumous "rehabilitation" of a few prominent Russian writers, such as Gumilev and Nabokov. We note that the privilege of rehabilitation seems to be conferred exclusively on the dead, who are guaranteed not to say or do anything unexpected; moreover, many other dead writers still await their turn.*

The invitations to a few prominent émigrés to return home, the past "forgotten", is said to betoken a new cultural freedom. Were Soviet audiences allowed to choose for themselves, émigré artists and writers would require no back-door negotiations with the authorities. One might forget the past, but how can anyone forget the continuing omnipresent party control—especially after tasting freedom in the West?

THIS "DISSENTING OPINION" *by ten prominent Russian cultural figures in exile was published in most of the newspapers of the Western world; and the full text also turned up, astonishingly enough, in Russian translation in the "Moscow Evening News", with "Pravda" publishing a polemical reply the next day.*

FINALLY, **suppose that Gorbachov's most daring suggestion to date—freer elections within the party—were to be implemented. Such a great leap forward would merely assure the Soviet people what the blacks now enjoy in South Africa; 7% of the population would hold "free" elections for themselves.**

ARE WE SO *accustomed to Soviet repression that the slightest deviation appears revolutionary? The fact is that the Kremlin could afford an even greater temporary "retreat" without truly altering the nature of the régime. It could reduce the excesses of the criminal justice system, allow more people to emigrate, and withdraw from Afghanistan. It could even publish "The Gulag Archipelago". The Soviet Union could become as "free" and "capitalist" as Poland, Hungary, Yugoslavia, or China. The real question is not how far the current "thaw" will go, but for how long. For, unlike Hungary and Poland, the Soviet Union has no Big Brother who can come to the rescue if need be; and, unlike China, it has a host of small brothers to look after.*

IF THE SOVIET LEADERS **were really intent on radical change, they would first have to discard the basic fallacy of Marxist-Leninist dogma. While doctrine ordains war against the "class enemy" there cannot be genuine peaceful coexistence with the "bourgeois" world, and peaceful coexistence inside the Soviet Union is no more likely. In the "historic struggle of the two worlds", Soviet citizens cannot simply be left to pursue their private lives and aspirations as ordinary members of the human family: they are bearers of "socialist justice", "socialist culture", "socialist sport", and now even "socialist *glasnost*". For the West to take the new policies at face value is to deal with the symptoms and ignore the disease.**

NATIONAL RECONCILIATION *cannot be achieved by releasing a couple of hundred prisoners from jails where they should not have been in the first place. The Soviet Union is a gravely sick country whose leaders have had to break with a 70-year tradition of silence merely to gain a little trust from the Soviet people and the world outside. It is* **they**, *however, who must learn to trust.*

They must give the people the right to administer justice in proper courts, and they must learn to have enough respect for public opinion not to engage in their customary tactics of disinformation and manipulation. They must stop any further militarisation of Soviet society and make "glasnost" a reality by revealing the full truth about the crimes committed by the Soviet régime.

IF 70 YEARS **of doctrine have brought to ruin one of the richest countries on earth, the doctrine is clearly faulty. Gorbachov admits that no one in all those years succeeded in putting the country right; perhaps, then, the time has come to reject the system itself.**

As for people in the West, they should not readily applaud Gorbachov for promising conditions that they would not tolerate for one moment.

Vasily Aksyonov
Eduard Kuznetsov
Vladimir Maximov
Yury Orlov
Alexander Zinoviev
Vladimir Bukovsky
Yury Lyubimov
Ernst Neizvestny
Leonid Plyushch
Olga Zinoviev

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no doubt that the smallest eclipse of power in the centre would lead, perhaps in one single day, to the liquidation of Communist power throughout the satellite empire.

—You don't think that, if such a situation were to arise, the Western countries would come to the rescue of the Soviets on the calculation that in a dangerous world **any** *stability is better than none? In 1956 the Western nations did not even bother to recognise Hungary's declaration of neutrality; much less did they contemplate any action, apart from falling out among themselves over Suez.*

BESANÇON: I share your pessimism. But that is no reason for us to ignore the troubled state of the Soviet system and the incendiary materials it has accumulated. After Chernobyl the Soviet leadership was silent for thirteen days. One can only imagine that Gorbachov and his colleagues were clueless or in a state of panic, reminding us of Stalin's long silence after Hitler had invaded his country and the panic that (as we now know) preceded his first nervous broadcast.

In 1976-77 there was a state of near-famine in the Soviet Union. The Western world and the US in particular saved the Soviet system from the consequences of its own follies, partly because American farmers needed outlets and the politicians needed votes, and partly (as people like George Kennan argued) because the food-weapon was thought to be an unethical weapon to be used against any country! Right now, a much enfeebled Soviet Union is receiving cheap grain from America—grain subsidised by the same American taxpayer who is also asked to fork out billions of dollars to counter the Soviet military threat. The simple fact is that without Western help the Soviet system would have imploded a long time ago and could do so still. It's the West that has kept the Soviet system going.

One day our governments will have to understand that it is, in the long run, not only more honourable but also safer to allow the Soviet system to collapse than to bail it out time and again in the hope that it might reform itself. The Soviet Union will never become a quiet and responsible member of the international community. It will never behave like France or Holland or Canada. That is not the mantle Mr Mikhail Gorbachov inherited from Lenin, Stalin, Khrushchev, Brezhnev and Andropov. That is not what 1917 was about.

YOU SAID THAT *the threat to the Soviet empire is greatest in the Soviet Union itself, because the system is absurd and corrupt and is seen to be such by the people. It seems to me that Gorbachov is well aware of the absurdity and corruption, and has set out on the hazardous journey of trying to "restructure" the system. Leaving aside the controversial question of whether it would be in the Western interest to have an "acceptable" type of Communism in Russia rather than the clearly unattractive kind which Gorbachov inherited, wouldn't you say that Gorbachov is now trying to kick the system into the 20th century and the Russian people into something like the Protestant work-ethic?*

If so, shouldn't we extend a guarded welcome to his reforming zeal on the principle that even Khrushchev's short-lived reformism left an historic mark on the Soviet empire by taking Stalin down from his pedestal, dispersing the Gulags, causing the Poles and Hungarians to rebel, and destroying the monocentric world Communist movement? These mighty consequences of de-Stalinisation had been unforeseen by Khrushchev and the men who supported him. What started out as a drive for greater efficiency and democratisation within the Party soon got out of hand and had to be throttled back to prevent an "implosion". But the damage was done, and the world learned a thing or two about the vulnerability of the Soviet system.

Mightn't we describe Gorbachov and his policies as cast in the mould of Khrushchev, and aren't these policies therefore "objectively speaking" likely to be of benefit to us even though they don't (yet?) match the broad sweep of the reorganisation Khrushchev tried to set in train or the "openness" prevailing in Hungary and Poland?

BESANÇON: I am deeply sceptical. Gorbachov does not so much remind me of Khrushchev as rather of Stalin in the early 1930s. He is conscious, as Stalin was, that the Soviet system needs to undergo radical change if the Soviet Union is not to be fatally handicapped in its bid for world domination. Now, as in the 1930s, the Soviet system is facing an international emergency. Just as "industrialisation-at-any-cost" was thought to be Moscow's answer to this emergency under Stalin, so technological modernisation and "restructuring" are thought to be the answers to the Soviet Union's grave structural weaknesses under Gorbachov.

For quite a few years, while he was establishing himself in power, Stalin was looked upon by Western scholars and observers as "a pragmatist" and "a moderate". Emil Ludwig came away from a long interview with Stalin thinking he had met a man of sobriety and reason—the year was 1931. In the Ukraine peasants were being deported and starved by the million. The Webbs, H. G. Wells and, even much later, Churchill and de Gaulle felt Stalin was a man with whom they could do business; a believer, to be sure, but not a fanatic. Midge Decter, the perceptive American writer, recently observed:

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". . . the Russian Revolution is seventy years old. During those seventy years the Soviet Union, not counting a couple of brief interregnums, has had seven 'leaders', four of them within the past six years. Leaving aside Lenin . . . each of them has been hailed by American journalists at one time or another as ushering in a new era."

This desperate desire to find liberalism, real reforms, even the beginnings of systemic change where (to my mind) there aren't any, is riding high again. It tells us more about the mentality of Western journalists and diplomats than the mind of Mikhail Gorbachov. Assisted by a much smarter team (Dobrynin, Yakovlev and Falin gained their spurs as Ambassadors in the US, Canada and West Germany) than were any of his predecessors, Gorbachov has learned how to appeal to the American sense of guilt and the West European sense of accommodation—how to upset Americans by pointing to shortcomings in *their* human rights record and flatter West Europeans by appointing Russia a place under a common European roof and a shared culture. Above all, he has learned how to unnerve both Europeans and Americans by playing on their fear of the nuclear factor. That he is doing so using the Chernobyl disaster for his text shows the nerve the man has, and the perverse advantage centralised dictatorships enjoy over us in not having to contend with inquisitive legislatures, a critical press, and an unpredictable public opinion. Gorbachov is harnessing his system *and* our own to his objectives, and with considerable sophistication.

3. Leninism with a Human Face

MY IMPRESSION IS *that Gorbachov is a more radical reformer (if that is the right word) than his activities have so far betrayed although, since the January 1987 plenum, the thrust of his "restructuring" policies is increasingly obvious, and therefore increasingly resisted by the old establishment. He is facing a double dilemma in that he is up against the dogmatic ways of a vast and comfortable Soviet élite as well as the backwardness of Russian political culture. He has to beat the potential Stalin that lurks in the soul of every "apparatchik" of any power* **and** *the heritage of "Oblomov". It is a tall order, and when Gorbachov speaks of the many years it will take to tame the two-headed monster, he seems to be saying that he is aware of the nature of the beast.*

It is, just, possible to imagine that Gorbachov will tame the spirit of the "Gulags"; but can he change the spirit of the "Dead Souls"? Any Eurocommunist worth his salt will tell us that it was Russian political culture that torpedoed in 1917 the "humanitarian vision" of Marx. Might it not do the same to Gorbachov's "perestroika" *in 1987, and should we, in that case, not show Gorbachov a little more understanding than we have, on the whole, done so far if only on the (admittedly less than self-evident) principle that a Soviet system at peace with its own people would be less of a threat to the outside world?*

BESANÇON: What we are witnessing in the USSR today is another power-struggle. Gorbachov has won the first rounds but he is not home-and-dry yet. How do you establish yourself as the "new and vigorous man" in the Kremlin? You "disclose" the facts about the bankrupt stock you have inherited—you castigate your forerunners for having left you and your nation such a forbidding legacy—and you demand change to put things right. You don't, mind you, demand change of the sort that might upset the apple-cart and fling *you*, too, out of power—no, you demand just enough change to get rid of your opponents and clear the decks for the rule of your own oligarchy. You want the intelligentsia on your side, you want "openness", "democratisation", and several candidates to run for local elections.

Multiple candidacy in the Party is an especially refined device, for it saddles the *apparat* with a sense of insecurity. Stalin practised it to good effect in 1934 when "secret voting" was used by him to destabilise his opponents. What you do *not* demand is that the monopoly of the Communist Party should be broken, nor do you ask for genuinely free elections or the freedom of public opinion. Gorbachov came up in the Soviet system. He knows what is good for him.

—Gorbachov, on your showing, is a Leninist with a human face. He wants us to see the human face but not the Leninism. As the Western public knows what a human face is like but has only the haziest notion about Leninism, isn't it gratuitously playing into Gorbachov's hands?

BESANÇON: Yes, it is, and Gorbachov is making excellent use of it. One important objective of his new "openness" and reform policies is the acquisition of Western goodwill. He needs credits, modernisation, joint ventures, and some assurance that the American investment in SDI will not drive him into a corner, although I don't think SDI is now the real issue. It seems to me to be a lever designed to extract from the West more concessions than would otherwise be forthcoming in certain areas which the Soviet government considers to be crucial, as for example the removal of medium-range nuclear weapons from Western Europe.

What threats and bluffing could not achieve in Soviet propaganda or at the negotiating table, Gorbachov's outwardly spectacular reforms, his smiles and bonhomie might, or so he clearly hopes. Sakharov's release is a good example. Sakharov is sceptical about SDI. He is now free to say so. Gorbachov appears to have harnessed Sakharov to his anti-SDI propaganda at the cost-effective price of releasing a few hundred prisoners who should not have been put behind bars in the first place. Gorbachov can now say to Reagan: "I agree with Sakharov—do you?" Will Reagan risk being seen to take sides against Sakharov?

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YOU HAVE NOT DEALT WITH *the unwanted and unforeseeable consequences of Gorbachov's reforms. In Bratislava the other day, unidentified Slovaks pinned a poster on a building in the centre of the city—"WE WANT GORBACHOV"—only to have it removed by the police. Ceausescu has been openly critical of Gorbachov's analysis of "real existing socialism" and said the Soviet way was not for him. So, less openly, did Honecker.*[2] *In East Berlin, Gorbachov's long speech to the January 1987 plenum was first published only in carefully chosen extracts; in Prague not at all. "Pravda", "Izvestia" and "Literaturnaya Gazeta" acquired the status of* samizdat *publications in the Czech capital and were selling at a premium! When students at the Charles University protested at a lecture that "The Soviet Union is our model", they were told, "One cannot automatically apply Soviet political experience to Czechoslovak conditions". Dubček must have been rubbing his eyes.*

I can foresee a number of interesting developments. The spectacle of undernourished Communist Romania being "liberated" by Soviet tanks with popular Romanian approval is only one, if Gorbachov stays the course. But I can also foresee the forces of disaffection, especially in the peripheries of the empire, hijacking Gorbachov's programme and putting the system under great strain (with the hearty approval of the Italian Communists), as they did in 1956 and 1968.

Isn't Soviet history suddenly a bit more open again? And shouldn't our practical politicians use the leverage that's been unexpectedly given them rather than bank on a cataclysmic turn of events?

BESANÇON: Nothing is impossible in the world of politics, but I would have thought civil society in the Soviet Union has been so thoroughly weakened that the chances of Gorbachov being overtaken by those driving in the "liberal" lane are almost non-existent. He might, as Khrushchev was, be overtaken by nationalism and the drive for independence in Eastern Europe, the Baltic States and Central Asia, but in the Soviet Union itself his fear must be a putsch by "conservative" forces on his right and the general disaffection of the *apparat*. If so, his fall would go unlamented by the people because Gorbachov is not popular. He has been challenging too many of Russia's stick-in-the-mud, lazy, egalitarian traditions. The Oblomovs are, as you say, a hardy factor.

In the final analysis, I cannot see the Soviet system reforming itself into something really different without ceasing to be the Soviet system. Once the power struggle is settled, the new masters of the state will have to enforce their rule with the same determination as had earlier ones who had also arrived with a new or revamped message but threw it away as soon as they felt themselves to be firmly in the saddle. I say "have to enforce their rule" because there are no freely chosen democratic institutions in the Soviet Union for running the affairs of the state and society in any other way. Perhaps it is as well that the Soviet system is what it is. It is making it extremely difficult for heretics and reformers to turn it into something better and thus to deceive a gullible world.

ON GORBACHOV'S OWN EVIDENCE, and all the evidence we had before Gorbachov took the lid off Soviet reality, I would say this in conclusion: there is no doubt that the Soviet system is so caught up in its mendacity, its internal contradictions and inefficiencies, that its end is now beginning to come within our vision. What will be most fascinating for an historian to observe is the speed of its demise, the manner in which it unravels, and the collateral impact these will have, not only on the world balance of power, but on that whole tradition of revolutionary utopianism of which the Soviet Union is the most lasting and devastating expression.

And if the Soviet system does not go under within the tangible future, it will be even more fascinating to see why and how it will have been saved by the "capitalist" West—whether the totalitarian dictatorship will have been upheld by our sense of charity, our fear of being dragged down by the Soviet colossus, or simply our decadence and decomposition.

[2] By the middle of April 1987, however, Kurt Hager, East Germany's chief ideologist, had made his Party's scepticism about the Gorbachov line abundantly clear. Speaking to *Stern* magazine (9 April 1987), he said: "Would you, seeing that your neighbour was having his apartment redecorated, feel obliged to have your apartment redecorated, too?"

Unlaced

The shoes beside his empty chair
to which her eyes keep straying
throughout our fragile chat

must be ten years old, at least,
unworn since he went away
three weeks ago: yet their sheen

is perfect, the image of his tree
not blurred by dust, the leather
tender as his Cheshire brogue.

The brush, worn in the centre
like their sandstone step,
will have warmed as she knelt

each morning in her quiet house,
the shadow of his fir-tree
stroking her bent shoulders,

fiercely scuffing, her apron
coaxing polish into life
—for when he came home.

John Latham

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Raymond Tallis

Musical Overdoses

"He promised me the earth", I heard Susie Jones saying—not for the first time—as I walked past her cubicle in the Observation Unit to my own patient.

That horrible man, her husband, the eternal "he" of her stories, has (yet again) promised this unfortunate woman, his wife, the earth. And (yet again) he has broken his promises. So Susie, finding that the promised earth has not materialised, has taken an overdose of Valium in the hope that that man, somewhere outside the hospital, perhaps in another woman's bed, will have his conscience stung this bright and sunny Sunday morning. Who knows, he might even be frightened into honouring his latest batch of promises.

Doctors shouldn't dislike any of their patients. They should be infinitely understanding; after all, they get paid damned well for looking after those who come to them for help. But doctors are human beings, and when they are deprived of sleep they tend to get nasty and moralistic; their great hearts atrophy. Anyway, however inexcusably, I dislike Susie Jones and I have done so ever since her third or fourth suicide attempt. She's in her early twenties and was once described by Sister Andrews—bleeping me to see her down in Casualty several overdoses ago—as "that sullen complaining hard-faced bitch with the dyed hair". Certainly her young face looks as if it has spent a lot of its life emitting signals of hatred during screaming rows.

When I first met her she had taken the beginner's choice—aspirin—and her serum electrolytes were all up the spout. I thought we were going to lose her, and I had one of the most anxious nights of my life keeping her alive. More recently she has preferred Valium for her overdoses: a very sensible choice. Nine out of ten experienced parasuicides make it their top choice for everything from a feeble gesture to a big scream. Valium goes particularly well with alcohol.

Remarkable stuff, alcohol. It has two sides to it: social when swallowed in moderate quantities by itself; and pharmacological when taken in excess and in combination with centrally-acting drugs. Using it as premedication ensures a smooth transition from the social situation to the medical, from the row in the pub to the climactic moment of reconciliation when the guilty party sits at the hospital bedside holding the injured party's venepunctured hand. Combining booze and pills gives a satisfying continuity to the whole story, nicely integrating the personal and the pathological, making it as reasonable to round off Saturday night in the Observation Ward of a District General Hospital as to wind it up in an after-hours drinking club.

Last year, when Susie and her rather older husband—it's his second marriage—were playing what Sister Andrews called "musical overdoses", club and hospital really did seem to be equivalents as well as alternatives. Mr Jones would go off to a club with "another woman" and Mrs Jones would be brought to hospital overdosed with Valium; or Mrs Jones would go off to a club with "another man" and Mr Jones would be admitted in coma with *his* stomach full of Valium.

Perhaps I am exaggerating or simplifying. But Susie's subsequent overdoses have made me, in retrospect, rather angry about the anxiety she caused me on the night of her first "suicide" attempt. This morning, I am pleased to learn, she is not ill enough to need the attention of a Medical Registrar, so I am not involved in her management. Small overdoses are Psychiatry; only the big ones are Medicine first and Psychiatry afterwards. Nevertheless, I still feel angry as, on my way to seeing a man of forty-three in the next cubicle who has been sent in by his GP with what sounds like a hefty coronary, I hear her familiar voice.

"He promised me the earth. But you know what men are like. . . ." Cadet Nurse Wilkinson, who must be at least seventeen but looks much younger, probably doesn't yet know. But she understands the general idea: the *Grundlagen* of Man Theory are well covered in *True Romance*. Besides, this is her first month working in a hospital and she knows how hospitals must try to help not only those who are physically ill but also those who have been hurt by life, not only the injured but also the self-injured. When, at the age of thirteen, she had enrolled, like my niece, with The Junior Red Cross, she would have vowed "to join with others all over the world to help the Sick and Suffering". The Red Cross motto "Serve One Another" has, like Pauline charity, no exclusion clauses. One must be understanding, even where one does not understand.

And so she listens sympathetically. Unlike Sister, who has been supervising between ten and twenty stomach wash-outs a week for the last five years, she

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can still respond with pity to what, in Sister's eyes, are at best exhibitions of self-pity. Her view of Susan-the-Overdose differs from Sister's idea of her as "a typical manipulating little madam who just needs a good hiding", "a roaring psychopath who needs drama just as other people need sex or drink—except that she has plenty of those as well." Cadet Nurse Wilkinson is still acutely aware of herself as a *nurse*; and a nurse is someone who invariably reacts with sympathy—as well as decisive action—to those who are brought low by the undeserved suffering that has befallen them. She, alone of the staff, it appears, is capable of responding with the hoped-for shock to the idea of someone wishing to take her own life. Though she is worried about what Sister might say when she catches Susie smoking (The oxygen! The bronchitics!), and about the temperatures she hasn't taken yet and the beds that are still unmade, she hides her worries and listens, enthralled, holding Susie's non-smoking hand.

I WAS TREATED to Sister's views about Susie one uncharacteristically quiet Sunday morning about a year ago when Susie's overdose count was still in single figures. She had been brought in drunk after she had witnessed a punch-up between her husband and her boy-friend.

"But it's a cry for help", I said to Sister, waiting for the explosion.

"That's all they bloody do, cry for help. When do they ever try to help themselves? And more to the point, when do they ever try to help *anyone else*? I've no time for psychopaths."

Sister Andrews has a full-time job, four children under the age of ten and a husband with multiple sclerosis.

"You'll feel guilty about it if she does bump herself off one of these days."

"Her kind rely on that. Us thinking that one day they *might* do it. So that then we'll all feel sorry about the nasty things we said about them. Susie has *never* intended to kill herself."

"Intended or not, she nearly succeeded the first time. She'd be playing a harp now if it hadn't been for yours truly's brilliant management of her acid-base balance."

"She obviously liked it so much with God knows how many people—including half a dozen handsome young doctors—fussing over her that she thought she'd do it again. . . ."

"And again. . . ."

"And again. For God's sake, she's hooked on it like some people are hooked on drugs. She's an *overdose* addict", Sister Andrews concluded.

"The trouble is you can never tell which overdoses are serious and which are just—well, a pharmacological V-sign to someone or other."

"That's exactly what I mean. They play on that. On your nerves. And they love making you feel guilty. What I'd like to know is when did they ever make anyone feel *happy*? When did they ever do anything useful for anyone else instead of always whingeing on about how badly they have been treated by their parents or their husbands or their boy-friends?

"You can't blame them", I said, poker-faced.

"Once you start on that nonsense, there's no end to it. You can't blame their parents because *they* couldn't help it either."

"Because it was *their* parents' fault. Who can't be blamed, either. And so on back to primeval slime and the first bit of DNA to try to bring up, or blackmail, another bit of DNA."

"And you end up with nobody to blame."

"Which is really rather frustrating."

"Meanwhile it's up to people like us to sort it out and your coffee's getting cold."

One reason why patients like Susie annoy Sister Andrews is that she sees them as squandering precious resources. She knows all about limitation of resources and priorities for health: it took her nearly two years to get an electric wheelchair for her husband.

Actually, she has been rather less vocal since the Observation Unit lost a couple of its regulars. One jumped out of a fourth-storey window and ended up in the Intensive Care Unit with a ruptured liver and spleen and a fractured pelvis and shaft of femur. She was doing quite well until she had a fatal pulmonary embolus. The other regular had failed to do her homework properly before her tenth overdose and her cry for help had had the same unsatisfactory outcome. She had swallowed forty or so Panadol, doubtless imagining that, as they were available over the counter, they could not be very dangerous. Three days later, her liver fell apart. Hyperventilating and jaundiced, ten stone of snorting butter, she was flown by helicopter to a specialist liver unit for unsuccessful heroics.

I DON'T LIKE the look of the man with the coronary. It could well be a big one. He is pale, sweating and in great pain. He is also rather breathless and so he may be in heart failure. He is beyond being able to give me a coherent history. He had come in on a self-dialled 999 call, but the ambulance men seem to have vanished for a cup of tea so they aren't around to help with the history. There is no time to be lost and, as I examine him quickly, Sister draws up the diamorphine, Staff Nurse prepares a drip-trolley and someone else tries to raise the houseman who is a bit slow answering his bleep. The ECG confirms the diagnosis of a myocardial infarction. I manage to get an IV line into his rather collapsed peripheral circulation. The diamorphine almost immediately relieves his pain but he is still quite severely short of breath.

I can still hear Susie declaiming her troubles. She is not content with being heard by Cadet Nurse Wilkinson: she must be overheard by everyone else. Everyone

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must be told about this man who promised her the earth and then let her down. At the very least it passes the time for her. She is actually waiting to see the Psychiatric Registrar on call, whose duties include interviewing all the overdoses. Susie is only one of five admitted last night. Two of these, however, are on medical wards, their comatose bodies being sorted out by our team before their souls can be referred to the psychiatrist. And two others, after wandering round the Unit in their night-dresses for half an hour, noisily looking for a phone, have taken their own discharges—against (rather insincere) medical advice. The latter two were friends: "My friend took one, so I took one, too", Sister acidly remarked. It is usually touch and go whether Susie will wait to be seen; but this time she has apparently decided that there is more mileage to be gained from actually seeing the psychiatrist than from carrying out the threat to take her own discharge.

"250 milligrams of IV aminophylline, Sister, and 40 of IV frusemide."

The frusemide can go in quickly but the aminophylline injection always has to be given slowly for fear of precipitating a nasty cardiac arrhythmia. I advance the syringe millimetre by millimetre over several minutes. The drip is up. The ECG is running. All is ready in case of cardiac arrest. The diamorphine has settled the man and his restored calm seems to spread throughout the Observation Unit. The comparative quiet is broken only by the sound of Susie's voice. She is talking even louder, in response to the sense that the main focus of attention is now decisively elsewhere.

"You know what men are bloody like. They're only after one thing. And when they've had what they want, they just chuck you aside. . . ."

Her voice is grating on Sister's ears.

"If you're all right for the moment, I'll try getting hold of Dr Patel." Patel is the Psychiatric Registrar on call. "I can't understand why he isn't answering. Unless he's dropped his bleep in the bath again."

FIVE MINUTES seems a very long time when you are giving an injection. The broken night—two cardiac arrest calls and a couple of other interruptions—starts surfacing as tiredness. The autopilot takes over and my thoughts drift, their agenda determined by Susie's continuing monologue.

Presumably Mr Jones made his promises pre-coitally and broke them when he woke from his post-coital slumber. I wonder what he actually promised. Scarcely the earth because it doesn't usually fall within the gift of a working man and she wouldn't have believed him. And why, anyway, should she think she deserved it? Who had led her to expect that sometime in early adult life someone would offer her the earth? What did she promise in return? The earth as well? Or did she think her body was an adequate counter-promise to any that he made? A silent promise of eternal carnal contentment that would have made any spoken promise redundant? An inexhaustible trove of erotic joy disclosed to eye and hand and genitalia? I was in no position to judge as I had only seen her wearing a make-up of tears and vomit, howling in the hard, clinical brightness of the treatment room, not smiling enigmatically in the muted light of a night club. . . . Even so, I would say that she was less attractive than bosomy dark-eyed Sister Andrews, and few people had come flocking to *her* with promises of the earth, as she had more than once remarked. . . .

Just as the injection was coming to an end, the rhythm on the ECG changed.

"Christ, SVT", the houseman who had finally arrived, reported.

"Get some Verapamil, quickly. Get Sister."

Ten milligrams of the one and approximately sixty-five kilograms of the other appeared very quickly. I started another slow injection, pausing every ten seconds or so to see whether the drug was altering the trace on the cardiac monitor back to normal.

"Can I leave Staff Nurse Williams with you while I try and get Patel again? If that woman stays here much longer I may not be responsible for my actions."

She went out of the cubicle and I could hear her calling Cadet Nurse Wilkinson to tidy up the coffee things in her office after she has finished off the beds. Shortly afterwards, Patel, the psychiatric registrar, half walks half runs past the cubicle. He is mortified at the accusation of not answering his bleep. He is usually almost pathologically conscientious.

"I cannot imagine how it could have come about, this disastrous circumstance", he begins, his English regressing under emotional pressure.

"Neither can I. Anyway, you've only got one customer, the other two have taken their own discharge. They only needed a smacked bottom, which of course they won't get. Let me introduce you to Mrs Susan Jones. I'm afraid we haven't got her notes up yet but don't go through it all again. Anything you want to know about her childhood and her dreams, I can tell you. And if you're a good boy and get her out of here by eleven o'clock, then I'll ask Cadet Nurse Wilkinson to make you a cup of coffee."

After about two or three milligrams of Verapamil, the ECG reverts to a normal rhythm but the blood pressure has dropped. We wait to see what is going to happen next. Neither the houseman nor I wants to talk much: he looks even more tired than I feel. My ruminations about Susie continue of their own accord. Of course, she didn't mean that he *literally* promised her the earth. Her use of language is gestural, figurative, not referential. She is not one of those who own the language they speak; she merely has it—or its higher flights of expressiveness—on loan. That is why her verbal responses to the more complex things in life are invariably cast in hand-me-down rhetoric. As a result, her tongue can rarely command the sympathy she may once have deserved. She cannot speak out, so she has

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to act out, to resort to the language of physical gesture. She speaks broken English and fluent hysteria. Hence the overdoses.

I can imagine Sister Andrews's response to this. She knows many people who are not very good with words but, nevertheless, can still manage to communicate with others without resorting to overdoses and abusing the time, the energy and the good will of hard-pressed hospital staff. I have to agree. There *are* modes of self-expression open to ordinary, non-literary people other than self-poisoning. I am probably trying to work up, on theoretical grounds, the sympathy I wouldn't otherwise feel when her next big overdose makes her a medical as well as a psychiatric emergency.

"Looking a bit better", the houseman says, after he has rechecked the blood pressure. "Shall I go and see what's going on in the wards?"

"Yes. Don't sneak off to bed, though. I may need you down here again shortly. By the way, the next time you have a lie-in with Nurse Carpenter, don't bury your bleep between her beach balls so that you can't hear Sister Andrews calling for help."

"I think it needs recharging."

"Don't we all! Could you tee up the path. lab and the radiographer for this chap? We'll need the usual. When he settles down, you can clerk him in. I'll stay with him for the moment."

I SIT DOWN on the bed and take his hand. He is sleeping peacefully, pain-free and eupnoeic. I listen to Susie pretending not to be able to understand Patel's accent. She is frightfully apologetic and he has to repeat, with increasing deliberateness and increasing loudness, his questions about her past medical history and her present social circumstances.

Patel is sincere and hard-working. He is especially hard-working (and sincere) at the present because he has applied for a job in the States and he is hoping to get a good reference from his Consultant. He knows that Dr Lopes pays particular attention to the standard of case-notes. So Patel fills numerous sheets of paper on every patient he sees, even those who are already well known to the department. "History and findings as before" is simply not good enough. He must cover every aspect of the case, from childhood neurotic traits, such as nail-biting, right through to the present medication which, even in overdose, does not seem to have done much for Susie. He takes particular note of the fact that Susie's husband, at forty-three, is nearly twenty years older than she is. This is something that Dr Lopes will consider significant and he is bound to pick him up on it. I don't envy Dr Patel. He must be glad that the other two conscious overdoses have taken their own discharges.

My patient starts getting restless. I re-examine him. His rhythm is unchanged but his blood pressure has fallen even further. He is in cardiogenic shock.

"Sister!" Oxygen, dobutamine, a Swan-Ganz catheter. . . . The various ploys pass through my mind. But already the dismaying certainty that he is going to die from his massive myocardial infarction has taken root in my heart. I have a ghastly sinking feeling that we are going to lose a man of forty-three with a heart attack. The sinking feeling is not clearly separate from my gradual realisation of the identity of my critically-ill patient. His shocked and cyanosed state had delayed recognition until now.

Susie is still talking. "Of course, he promised me the earth. And then. . . . Well, you know what men are like, Dr Singh. Or perhaps you don't. Perhaps you have to be a woman to know what men are like. Anyway, you're probably not like that at all. You're probably a real gentleman before *and* after. Are you married, Dr Singh. . . ?"

"Dr *Patel*, Mrs Jones. . . ."

"Sorry?"

"Dr Patel. My name is Patel."

"Now why did I think you were called Dr Singh? I suppose to an ignoramus like me all Indian names sound the same."

"You wanted me, Doctor Underwood?"

"We'd better call the crash team, Sister. I think he's about to peg it. And get someone to alert Intensive Care. We'll need a CVP line and. . . ."

SO MR JONES is not in some other woman's bed this morning, guiltily or vengefully pursuing his desires. He's here in hospital, fighting for his life, only a few yards away from his long-, or loud-, suffering wife. It looks as if one cycle of musical overdoses is coming to an end and someone else will have to take over treating Susie badly. She will, of course, find herself a new partner; but her mourning in the meantime will also be loud and long. Dr Patel, Sister Andrews and even Cadet Nurse Wilkinson are going to be very busy this bright and sunny Sunday morning, comforting her as she realises that her husband has left the earth he so faithlessly promised.

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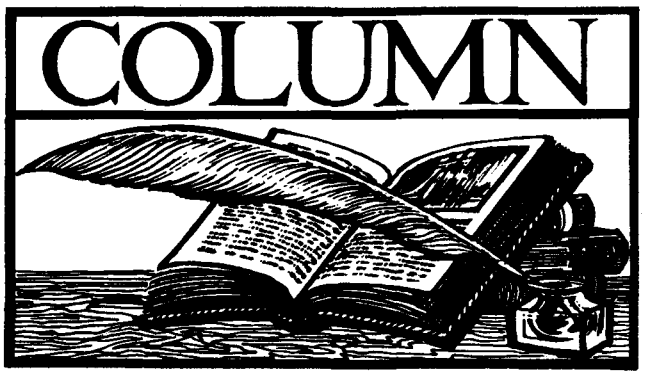

TELEVISION and video-cassettes seem to be affecting the cinema as printing affected the Church. Direct access to the Bible spurred the Reformation: seeing movies at home has not only shaken the industry but changed the look of the films. New pictures go in for cathedral wealth or bombast; old ones, reduced to living-room or chapel size, come under closer scrutiny. Hierarchies are reshuffled, screen classics demoted, neglected works rediscovered. More attention is focused on words and content, breaking the hieratic hypnosis of the big screen.

Reassessment brings surprises. *Singin' in the Rain* still sparkles after a quarter-century; *Le salaire de la peur* barely thrills. And a strange reversal has marked the work of Jean Cocteau. *Orphée*, once so modern and magical, now looks to me a little contrived and dated—though still a monument. *La Belle et la Bête*, which I used to think overblown, surprised me by its beauty and emotion. Only *Les parents terribles* and *Les enfants terribles*, of Cocteau's four major films, remain roughly as they seemed when I saw them first.

During the same period, Cocteau's reputation in general has suffered similar ups-and-downs. As a young man, he was astonishing—a brilliant wit, a dab hand at all literary trades, a fountain of invention, floodlit by himself. Not everyone saw what lay beneath the dazzle: his father's suicide when he was eight years old, his deep attachment to his mother, his self-doubts, his religious feelings, his immense hard work, his emotional vulnerability—to both sexes—shielded by his dry, elegant use of words. Then came the prodigy's nemesis, middle age. At length, Cocteau left Paris and settled in Saint-Jean-Cap-Ferrat, in the villa of a wealthy patroness, with his adopted son Edouard Dermit.

It was there, after a lifetime of public writing which still continued, that Cocteau began his last intermittent diary, *Le passé défini*. In a probable six volumes, two of them so far published in Paris, it runs from 1951 to his death at the age of seventy-four in 1963. Some of it, like most diaries, is trivial; some betrays vanity or folly, such as misunderstanding Stalin or believing reports of flying saucers. But, alongside much amusing gossip, Cocteau's diary contains vivid portraits, shrewd reflections, and treasured memories. It sheds revealing light on Proust, Mauriac, Picasso, and Aragon, as well as on the author himself.

I was surprised, therefore, by British reactions to the translated first volume of *Le passé défini*.[1] Perhaps relying only on the text in front of them, reviewers called Cocteau pretentious, self-regarding, superstitious, superficial, snobbish, and decadent. One denounced his "flouncing dandyism", and found "piffling preciosity" in his youthful novel *Le grand écart*.

This last judgment seemed especially ponderous. *Le grand écart*, like "the splits" of its title, is a *tour de force*—a high-spirited account of a young man let loose in the Paris of the '20s, in love (as Cocteau had been) with an older woman, but dizzily trying out a variety of roles. Moral tales and epigrams spice the story: e.g., "Fashion dies young—that's why its frivolity is so serious." And if that seemed neo-Wildean, at almost the same time Cocteau published a war novel, *Thomas l'imposteur*, essentially portraying the Great War as Fabrice had seen Waterloo in *La Chartreuse de Parme*. If he was the butterfly that British critics appear to think him, he was certainly hard to catch.

But the butterfly image seems to me misleading. Like the epithets already quoted, it seems to disguise an unattractive subtext—deprecating Cocteau, for sturdy British readers, as effeminately effete.

This raises a thorny subject. Nearly everyone, in artistic or intellectual circles, would disclaim any prejudice against "gays". Yet when critics discuss homosexual or bisexual writers, a subtle change seems to come over them. They find, perhaps, what they subconsciously seek: elegance, dexterity, surface polish, finicky scruple, feline obliqueness—not power, depth, energy, robustness, or drive.

The stereotype, of course, is part of a general climate—one in which the discovery or admission of homosexuality can still damage a political career. It's this, I imagine, that fires the continued efforts of gay rights campaigners. No one reasonable, nowadays, could surely argue that male or female homosexuals should be persecuted, punished, condescended to, sniggered at, or despised. With the onset of AIDS, they may be warned, and the victims pitied; but few people in the West would now have the gall to regard homosexuality as a mental illness to be "cured".

YET "DISCRIMINATION" remains a complex issue. The law in Britain, at present, still does discriminate against homosexual males. At sixteen, girls can marry or legally agree to sexual intercourse: so can boys. But not until they're twenty-one can young males legally consent to homosexual acts; and any man seducing a boy below that age can be sent to prison. Likewise, although some "equal opportunities employers" explicitly include gays among those against whom they don't discriminate—while others, more debatably, practise reverse discrimination—there remains no equivalent, for gay men and women, of the laws forbidding discrimination by race or sex.

Many heterosexuals would maintain that these legal discrepancies have a sound basis. Girls seem to mature earlier than boys, and Britain never outlawed lesbians—perhaps because male legislators had limited experience. Any move to lower

[1] *Le passé défini: Journal 1951-1952*. By JEAN COCTEAU. Annotated by PIERRE CHANEL. Gallimard, 120 FF. *Past Tense: The Cocteau Diaries, Volume One*. By JEAN COCTEAU. Translated by RICHARD HOWARD with an Introduction by NED ROREM and annotations by PIERRE CHANEL. Hamish Hamilton, £15.00.

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the age of consent for homosexual males would undoubtedly lead to uproar; and it's hard to imagine even the looniest Leftist thus committing electoral suicide. Nor does there seem much support for the notion of a Homosexual Discrimination Act, perhaps because in the employment field it hardly appears to be needed.

For these reasons, gay rights campaigners have a difficult task. Having long since won their major battle, over acts by consenting adults in private, they look a little like Othellos whose occupation's gone. Some, still hotly pursuing the plumèd troop and the big wars, demand the right to adopt children and/or marry in church; a few, by make-up, dress, or manifesto, express contempt for heterosexuals, treating them as deviant propagandists for a disgusting, bourgeois, family-obsessed way of life.

Antics of that sort have understandably aroused ridicule and resentment. Some homosexual couples, male or female, may well be able to nurture children with firm and loving care: but there are risks involved. Not all such couples are as stable as the average marriage, rickety though that may be; and many professionals would maintain that children suffer from the absence, weakness, or ambivalence of a mother-father relationship in the home. Homosexual marriage, moreover, poses at least some questions for churches which proclaim as marriage's first purpose the procreation of children. Heterosexuals under counter-attack from extremist gay activists might be forgiven for pointing out that their own sexual preferences have built-in biological advantages.

But if polemics enliven by-elections and newspaper correspondence columns, they leave real problems unsolved. Despite André Gide's argument, in *Corydon*, that non-human animals are sometimes gay, heterosexuals still tend to see themselves as normal, and homosexuality as at best a mistake and at worst an aberration—what used to be called "an unnatural vice". Hence disapproval lingers, partly engendered by distaste. Years of legal oppression and furtive clandestinity have given homosexuality the public-lavatory associations so vividly evoked in the Joe Orton film *Prick up your Ears*; and they're reinforced by male physiology. Few heterosexuals, I imagine, are much upset by the thought of mutual masturbation. Quite a number no doubt practise oral sex. Anal intercourse is another matter—as witness such expletives as "*bugger*" and "*sod*".

These, like most swear-words, are signposts to deep uncertainties and fears—not only about the organic proximity of reproduction and excretion, but equally about sexual identity. Male and female created He them—but only approximately: most of us harbour in our being some elements of "the opposite sex". Gays, transvestites, and trans-sexuals are a permanent challenge to many people's elective affinities with themselves. Even now, long hair on impeccably macho workmen can arouse heterosexual hostility; and the mincing campness that some gays seem to have mimicked from their mothers is only defused by being turned into jokes. Again, vocabulary is indicative. There's deep uneasiness in insults like "*fag*", "*poofter*", "*brown-hatter*", "*fairy*", "*pansy*", "*nancy-boy*", or "*queer*". Even in France, where sex of all kinds is less charged with disapproval, gays face a battery of opprobrious nicknames: "*chochotte*", "*coquine*", "*empaffé*", "*enculé*", "*fagot*", "*Madame Arthur*", "*tante*", "*tapette*", *et ainsi de suite*.

So it's not quite fanciful to suspect that some of the coolness towards Cocteau is an emanation from that cultural climate. In the days before Jean Genet and Roger Peyrefitte made homosexuality their stock-in-trade, several writers took precautions against the chill, exercising literary discretion not only to reach a wider audience but also to show their own breadth. Proust changed the sex of "Albertine"; Gide wrote of heterosexual love, notably in *La porte étroite*. Cocteau, for his part, adopted and adapted Greek myth.

It didn't save him from his detractors. Gide caricatured him as "Robert de Passavant" in *Les faux-monnayeurs*. François Mauriac, after *Bacchus* many years later, predicted rather loftily that God would send him to hell. But Cocteau's enemies were less damaging than some of his admirers. If one group of critics undervalued his work because of his bisexuality, another overpraised it for just the same reason. The result, as he put it, was not a conspiracy of silence but a conspiracy of noise.

And it continues unabated. One of the trials involved in approaching the English version of *Le passé défini* is the din of adulation from its Introduction by Ned Rorem ("I love his work") and its Translator's Note by Richard Howard ("the most metamorphic career in Western culture since Merlin, yet the most single-minded poetic vocation since Orpheus"). It's a pity that Cocteau's admirers don't share his astringency. It's even more of a pity when his foreign translators blur his work.

"*De moi*", he wrote once, "*se promènent des traductions tellement folles qu'on se demande si le traducteur m'a lu.*" In the 1950s, at least four English translations exemplified the difficulty. Even Rosamond Lehmann, in her otherwise deft translation of *Les enfants terribles*, made the children sound too much like Enid Blyton's scallywags. Alec Brown, in a very serviceable version of *Journal d'un inconnu*, repeatedly rendered "*ténèbres*" by the far more mannered "tenebrosity". And another Cocteau enthusiast, whom chivalry forbids me to pillory yet again, produced "translations" of *Portraits-Souvenir* and *Opium* which not only teemed with errors, but in several places said exactly the opposite of what Cocteau had written.

It was difficult, therefore, for a monoglot reader of English to have much idea of Cocteau's strict French style. Sometimes he sounded clumsy, sometimes banal, sometimes highfalutin,

Heidelberg

Messperanto: **During a recent holiday on the Continent, I was struck by the number of foreign words filtering into different languages.**

The best example I encountered was in a fast food restaurant in Heidelberg where one could order

"Cheeseburger mit pommes frites und ketchup."

This order consists of two words in German, two in French and two in English/American.

Could this be the beginning of an international language?

THE TIMES

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sometimes nonsensical. All was forgiven, presumably, because he was a poet, labelling his work in every discipline "*poésie*". Poets, by definition, were inaccessible, if not incomprehensible. But what Cocteau had in mind was the Greek ποειν, meaning "to make". It was a conceit, not an obfuscation.

Admittedly, true translation is a contradiction in terms. The music, the connotations, and the cultural context of words can never make a faultless cross-frontier match. Even "the cat sat on the mat", in other languages, lacks the original's patness—to say nothing of the cosy hearthrug implication unlikely in either the tropics or a centrally-heated apartment. "*Traduttore, traditore*", as the Italian saying goes.

BUT ALTHOUGH PERFECTION's impossible, accuracy is not. And that, I'm afraid, is a frequent defaulter from Richard Howard's version of *Le passé défini*. Even the title, in English, is imprecise. Why not *Past Definite*? Was "tense" intended as some sort of pun? If so, it was inappropriate. Cocteau here is no longer the taut young man or the febrile ex-addict of opium: he's mellow, relaxed though busy, at times a touch *pantouflard*. Altogether, I counted 123 instances of awkward or wrong translation in some 375 pages; and although many are minor, the cumulative effect is immense. Some of the mistakes are simple howlers, like "syndicalism" for "trade unionism" or "whores" for "dykes" (*gousses*). Some seem the result of carelessness: "dining" instead of "lunching", for example, or "fleet" instead of "ship". Some, again, may be matters of taste: "a pain in the ass [sic]" seems to me doubly unfortunate as the would-be equivalent of "*emmerdeuse*". But what reliance can be placed on a translator who has not even grasped the sense? Describing, on a return visit, a previous performance in the Theatre of Herod Atticus which he'd heard but not seen, Cocteau wrote: "*Nous sommes restés sous les poivriers pendant tout le spectacle invisible.*" Richard Howard's version reads: "We stayed under the pepper trees, invisible throughout the entire performance." What a difference a singular makes.

Nor is translation the only fault with *Past Tense*. Although handsomely printed and not outrageously priced, the book is by no means a full version of the original. It uses the invaluable notes which Pierre Chanel supplied for Gallimard; but unlike his scrupulous edition, it nowhere indicates cuts. Chanel's were in any case minor—partly omitting repetitions, partly respecting the wishes of Cocteau's legatee Edouard Dermit. The English edition not only ignores Chanel's discreet omission dots, but makes at least 134 further cuts of its own, some of them very considerable, and none of them signalled to the reader. That seems to me sharp practice, to say the very least.

So—beware of this edition when reassessing Jean Cocteau. It's too much to suggest that every reader, like the early beneficiaries of printed Bibles, should have an original in his own home. But there's no doubt in my mind that publishing, like the Church, needs alert congregations and continual reform.

M

Responses to drug and alcohol problems in the workplace

This multi-media resource kit consists of four brochures, a sound-slide presentation and promotional items. It is intended to serve as a step-by-step guide for employers and trade unions in general and, in particular, for those staff (e.g. supervisors, welfare officers, personnel managers, works' medical officers, etc.) who are concerned with developing appropriate responses aimed at preventing or resolving drug and alcohol problems in the workplace. *A detailed prospectus is available on request.*
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Three Poems by John Greening

Charles I on Horseback

(Van Dyck)

The King sits rigid, in chalky
bewilderment: his favourite grey
has just trotted calmly through a grove
and into a green morass, been swallowed,
and left him astride a nightmare
whose outline still glares at him, carved white
on that imaginary hillside opposite.

The dark equerry, the smiling equerry,
so quick to come to His Majesty's rescue,
has offered him now a fresh and hugely
muscular mount—more like a boulder
weathered to an approximate horse shape,
its miniature head protruding trimly
from a landscape of burial chambers.

The King tries to laugh—this monster
should be before a plough; or hauling some load
home from harvest; at any rate, securely anchored
against such poundings out of the earth
as have today snatched his best horse from under him—
till a sanguine half-smile rising near the oak
assures him that this is a very tranquil bay.

The dark equerry, the crimson equerry
on whom the King turns his back,
pretends that he must just once more polish
His Majesty's helmet before releasing him;
meanwhile, has concealed a flint or a frog's bone
in the crest, breathing into its restive
royal feathers the ancient Horseman's Word.

Archie Armstrong to the King

(Archie Armstrong was Court Jester to King Charles I)

Laughter even in war:
when there is naething
but blude on the air

I hae kept men laughing,
plain men considered
too plain for preserving,

a beldam widowed,
a bairn lost,
I hae seen them all led out

in fits at what I hae tossed
in their direction—
rattling wi' it!—Weel, maist

smile a fraction . . .
but mony hae laughed
as they lay their necks on

the block. . . . The others,
who wouldna give in,
but scowled, the buggers,

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introverted as sin,
all silent like a poker,
I screeched at 'em: "Grin,

mon, grin! Life's a joker
and it's the ane card
that trumps death!" But folk

are daft. Maybe it's hard
for 'em to accept
that heaven might be barred

to Puritans, and kept
braw for Jesters.
It's nae what they expect.

To Maiden Castle

(for my mother)

When your father, to avoid another scene,
Took up his black box, left, and climbed alone
To Maiden Castle, all he was hoping for
Was peace. It was the late 'thirties: a Spitfire
Being test-flown overhead; along the lane,
The telegraph-wires making siren sounds.
He wanted to see for himself, he said,
What the archaeologists were up to.
But you knew what he meant. The primal law
Of human nature: that relationships
Deteriorate, some in fury, some
To a cold war. What is it begins the end?
A mean squabble over a missing brooch,
A dropped ornament? Or your father's books,
Those books your mother detested so much
That when he died (Dust-gatherers! she said)
She threw them out. . . . Was it the books that day?
All those black words!

It wasn't history
That drew him to the Iron-Age hill-fort,
But musk of an exeat; the licence
To imagine, responsibility
Shelved, to look, to photograph, and instead
Of sitting long hours at his work scouring
Dry lines of a dull proof, to feel the ramparts
Break like a Pacific comber against him,
And capture in a light-sensitive frame
The moment.

He would have seen the trenches.
How the brigades floundered. Sir Mortimer
Smiling at his skeletons, their scooped-out
Neolithic skulls. He must have known too
The barrages. The arsenals. Fragments
Of a Venus. Offerings to the bull-god
In a thatched temple of Wisdom. Known them,
But never spoken of them. History
Was cinema flak.

It was the moment's beams
That he felt sway across and canopy
His threatened mind, its quiet interiors,
Its private spaces, clearing them of all
But present sensation.

And only this—
The photograph that he took—still survives
To help you piece his life back together,
As one might, from a brooch or an ornament,
Imagine the faintest outline of a race
Long vanished, their homes, their preoccupations,
Though never the words, the words that spark as
The ornament falls, the brooch goes missing,
Or a book is tossed resentfully aside.

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NOTES & TOPICS

London Commentary

An Ounce of Civility

By Edward Pearce

LOOKING AT the electoral prospects in Britain, it is of course open to write a boring piece about the outcome or the issues or the balance-of-power, all of a "Whither Britain" sort. I like to think that readers of ENCOUNTER, over-qualified people in frayed cardigans and with good degrees, would sooner that I didn't.

It seems, accordingly, altogether more important to write as best I can about something else. As Dr David Owen smoothly advances up the long march of the ascending polls, doing his "ship in the ocean", "man with a maid", soft-spoken, masterful act and picking up votes everywhere he goes, one is tempted to wonder about the *style* of politics.

The Kennedys were given to talking about "style", and their depressing hangers-on even more so. In their case it amounted to money, youth, rhetoric, and radical chic. But the habit lingered long after the ghost of John Kennedy's cash-and-carry presidency. A young researcher on the staff of a minor Right-wing member of the Thatcher Cabinet once confided that he had been working earlier that year for Teddy Kennedy. "What do you see in him?", I asked, seeing nothing in the candid man of Chappaquiddick (except, perhaps, the scrubby upper end of the George Higgins spectrum of discreditable Boston). "Oh", said the lad (perfect Tory back-bench material), "he's got style." Teddy Kennedy has the style of a patriarchal seal.

When style is alluded to now, the word is neutral. Style, as a British politician might go for it, does not mean the hapless pursuit of classiness, youth, beauty, or the other colour-supplement qualities. It is simply this way rather than that.

That way for Labour and Conservatives for a long time now has been a species of arm-wrestling, personal denigration, Manichean assumptions about a totality of rights and wrongs, and the terrible, heavy sarcasm of men in pursuit of office damning the motives of other men in pursuit of office. However (partly as a result of the existence of the Social Democrat-Liberal Alliance), a new approach to politics, which is by no means confined to that dual party, seems to be emerging.

There is a *nouvelle cuisine* of politics; decorous, protein-rich, and short of fatty excess. David Steel (Lib.) is its originator, David Owen (SDP) its best-known practitioner, Bryan Gould (Lab.) perhaps its most skilful adaptor. By contrast, the Conservative Party's Chairman, Norman Tebbit, is proprietor and bouncer of a greasy-spoon establishment, noted for large helpings, split sausages, bacon sandwiches, and grievous bodily harm. Heavy-cholesterol politics—as embodied by Mr Tebbit, who has never turned a carrot into a rosette in his life—do not have a good future. This will be true even if the Tories steal an election victory in circumstances where they have two-fifths of the vote and two oppositions spread across a single-party constituency battlefield.

WHAT WE ARE WATCHING is the irresistible advance of the quiet voice, conceding that the other parties are not without merit but are going rather too far. Whether it actually means good government, I don't pretend to know. It has some affinities with the cerebral politics of Hugh Gaitskell and his circle but without the cliquish conceit which marred that coterie. Its Conservative equivalent, necessarily kept on ice during the régime of the Catherine the Great of Finchley, is John Biffen's gentle echo of R. A. Butler, a form of politics for which great numbers of Tories yearn. As it is, we are living through a period of stylistic regression, compounded with a certain aggression.

For the moment heavy triumphalism, reinforced by the most deferential press in Western Europe, is being treated like a winner. But in terms of any future unrigged contest one would not want to put money on the trumpets-and-brass-knuckles style of government which has seen the lady through. Restraint, pastel colours, calibrated moderation will be in as surely as hemlines move up and down.

POLITICIANS AFFECT to be alerted to "market research", though it is a cumbersome sort compared to the subtle branch of the science employed in selling canned goods. Market research involves response to public demand, and if there is one self-evident piece of the public will—one shown now for years—it is a desire for peace and quiet, good humour, and an end to the butcher's-shop qualities of the House of Commons at 3.30 p.m., when Question Time comes round. The Alliance are into that sort of thing. David Steel, to do him justice, has been into it longer than anyone. It isn't an accident that he triumphs on television and empties the House of Commons: for the Steel matter is as modest as his manner. Professionals are frequently to be stirred by new ideas excitingly put; but then professionals make a very amateurish mistake if they suppose that that is what the public wants from politicians.

I do not lightly applaud Brian Walden, a man given to using complacency as a chef would use chicken stock. But he made a memorable observation some years ago. "There will be",

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he commented, "an unlimited future for the man who first gives the British what they truly want—tranquillity . . . ."

François Mitterrand used the very word in his successful election—"*La Force Tranquille*"—and, come to think of it, Mitterrand has weathered and lived out French politics impressively in conditions far harder than anything facing Mrs Thatcher. Jacques Chirac made the mistake (easily done in that bitter and quarrelsome country) of setting himself up as a Gallic Norman Tebbit. Even in fighting France it has rebounded, and the "soothing-old-dear" act of the President has regained its charm.

There were obvious lessons for Neil Kinnock as he watched the Labour vote unravel in the polls of March and April. Personally, I have a lot of time for Mr Kinnock. He is brave beyond expectation. No one expected him to take on the Liverpool Militants in the way he did. The courage is discounted now, like so many good deeds; but it was uncovenanted and quite unexpected when it happened. He has on most issues (except Defence) taken an essentially cautious and reformist line. His position on almost everything—outside unilateral disarmament—is plainly reasonable if disputable. But the Kinnock style works against him. Despite a pleasantness which led to early TV triumphs it has too much of the open-air meeting about it. He shouts when he should speak; he gets angry when he should deftly deride. He goes on too long.

The politics of the monster meeting are behind us. The "Durham Miners Gala" has shrunk to a melancholy social outing. There are no "masses" left, just a great number of ill-oriented, unpersuaded people. On the whole, it is better to speak to them quietly, to sound reasonable, to avoid the high notes of rhetoric and to deplore the noisy immoderation of the other chap—who, you concede (in the end), is not really a bad fellow, just misguided.

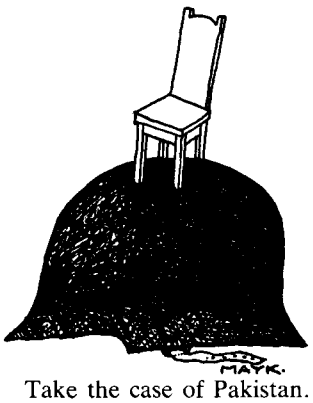
THE FUTURE lies this way. Mr John Biffen does this absolutely, Mr Kenneth Baker a little stiffly, Mr Malcolm Rifkind a touch pedantically for the Tories, as do the whole rising tribe of Chris Pattens, Tony Newtons, and John Majors. For Labour, the exemplars are not only Bryan Gould and John Smith, but the newer men—Tony Blair, Stuart Bell, and the inexcusably excluded and splendid Frank Field; they all follow the same pattern.

Persuasion is in favour. Vituperation is out. Which is bad news, I suppose—not only for the old-guard style (for Norman Tebbit, Mrs Thatcher, Denis Healey, Roy Hattersley, and Tony Banks) but for those of us who write about politics.

"*Give me an ounce of civility, good apothecary, to sweeten my polity*" is all very well. But I rather enjoyed riotous assembly.

Paris Notebook

No Peace, No War—By JEAN-FRANÇOIS REVEL



ARMS NEGOTIATIONS may be essential, and are bound to be the major theme of any further meeting between Gorbachov and Reagan; but they do not necessarily provide the framework for the most important transformations in the balance between the two Great Powers, and hence between the totalitarian and the democratic world.

Take the case of Pakistan. That country, the only one in Central Asia where the United States can still count on some support, is sandwiched between Afghanistan, under its new ownership, and India, which has strong diplomatic and military ties with the Soviet Union. The Indian Prime Minister, Rajiv Gandhi, refuses—like his mother, Indira, before him—to condemn the Red Army's presence in Kabul. Now, Pakistan is at present the setting for a rumble of political agitation which could lead either towards a pluralist, more democratic form of government, or else towards some sort of supposedly "progressive" ideology with a Soviet-leaning régime. Those Westerners who see Miss Benazir Bhutto as a pure champion of democracy at grips with a reactionary dictator are indulging in the customary simplistic complacency of uninvolved *bien-pensants*. The army, in the person of General Zia ul-Haq, took power in 1977 owing to the state of impotence which had been reached by the civil power, undermined by anarchy and corruption. It was a deplorable remedy for a deplorable sickness which unfortunately had broken out for the third time since the birth of the nation in 1947. This third takeover by the military took place with the consent of the majority of the population, and without bloodshed, except for the unspeakable hanging (two years later) of Zulfikar Bhutto, which was in no way excused by the many serious violations of human rights which certainly took place under the Bhutto Prime-Ministership.

General Zia is now promulgating a detailed timetable for the restoration of democracy, whose first stage came in 1985 with the restoration of the Parliament, following what were undeniably free and aboveboard elections. His opponent, Miss Bhutto, has no programme to offer. She draws crowds,

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it is true, but seems not to know where she wants to lead them. Perhaps she means to compel Zia ul-Haq into a brutal repression of the civil unrest that she herself creates, so as to block any route towards peaceful democratisation. Her Party, wrote the *Times* correspondent in Karachi, is more like a fan club for a film star than an organisation capable of producing a government. The least confused of her goals seem to be the instant overthrow of President Zia and a change in relations with the United States. The personal style of Benazir Bhutto suggests a kind of populist autocracy together with a reversal of her country's alliances.

In the event of such a change, obviously the first move by the Soviets would be to require Pakistan to stop harbouring the three million Afghan refugees now living on its territory, and therefore to push these refugees back into their own country. For them, that would mean serfdom or death. It would also bring the downfall of Afghan resistance, once deprived of its sanctuary. That would complete a Soviet victory already more than half achieved, for they are already entitled to consider that they have won their Afghan war, if not on the ground, then at the international level.

Public opinion in the West is reacting more and more flabbily and sporadically to the news of each new massacre. It is some way past the point of being tacitly resigned to the permanent retention of Kabul as a Soviet strongpoint, though perhaps at the price of a clumsy fudge which would keep up an appearance of independence while deceiving nobody. US financial and military aid to the resistance, a tardy trickle, looks capable of reversing the course of the battle. With Afghanistan conquered, Pakistan friendly, and Iran under close surveillance, Moscow would thus make a clean sweep of all Western influence in Central Asia; it would hold the Gulf states at its mercy and at long last would fulfil its enduring ambition of an *accès royal* to the Indian ocean.

A SEA-CHANGE of this scale, which is hardly unlikely, would involve no risk of nuclear war, would proceed irrespective of the bargaining on Nuclear Arms limitation, and would bring not a trace of a response from European pacifists and very little from Western anti-Communists. Yet it would shift the balance of power far more deeply, and permanently, than the series of talks about "deterrence" and "active defence". It is, therefore, in the interest of the Soviet Union to act so as to focus the attention of the democratic nations on the sole bilateral question of nuclear weapons, where it can exploit the emotional responses of public opinion, while pursuing a miscellany of profitable long-term operations which go practically unnoticed.

The Soviet diversionary tactic is a shrewd one; they orchestrate their propaganda around the theme: "The one true danger is the nuclear apocalypse. So let's drop everything else and attend to arms reduction. Meanwhile, look here, will you pass me that half-a-subcontinent which has done absolutely nothing to you? You refuse? So once again you are into confrontation, stoking up tensions, running the risk of nuclear war, driving mankind into collective suicide! . . . This apocalyptic blackmail means that no one now dares to oppose Soviet expansion, even where there is no danger of nuclear escalation.

LET NO ONE CONCLUDE from these remarks that I am suggesting that the problems of defence, and efforts to remove the possibility of nuclear warfare, are secondary. On the contrary, I suggest that arms negotiations are too important for them to be attainable in isolation from the other aspects of the world situation, and from collective policy whose keystone they must constitute. But a keystone is meaningless without an archway. Here I do not refer just to the old theory of the "linkage" of Western arms concessions with other aspects of Soviet behaviour—foreign invasions; espionage; subversion; terrorism; human rights. . . .

Linkage is not a question, it is a fact. It is not for us to decide whether the various aspects of Soviet strategy and tactics are or are not linked: they are linked because the Soviets would have it so. Only the USSR can profit from the pretence that they are not. Our own interest lies in understanding, on the contrary, that they are inseparable, and that arms negotiations have no meaning, can bring us no success, except in the light of this global perception.

That is the lesson to be drawn, at any rate, from the so-called "Decade of Détente" in the 1970s, when a whole series of treaties, which were supposed to lessen the danger of nuclear war, led in fact to the military strengthening of the Soviet Union, which also gained *carte blanche* to extend its influence almost worldwide. So let us recognise that somewhere in the Western approach to negotiating there must have been a flaw.

AND YET THERE IS in the United States a whole school of thought, dedicated to the notion of "Arms Control" and backed by powerful European pressure groups, particularly in Western Germany and Britain, which urges a repetition of our mistakes. In his latest book,[1] which has caused a considerable stir in the United States, Zbigniew Brzezinski (formerly National Security Adviser to President Carter, now an eminent academic and specialist in the problems of East-West relations[2]) dismantles what we French would call the "*mécanisme pervers*" of Arms Control. For many Westerners of good will, Brzezinski explains, Arms Control is the shortest pathway to peace. For the Soviets it is a means of seeking, and often of achieving, strategic preponderance. The Soviets are skilled in the art of issuing proposals, or launching apparently disinterested initiatives, which put Washington in the embarrassing position of appearing to world opinion as the side that puts obstacles in the way of progress in disarmament.

[1] *Game Plan: A Geostrategic Framework for the Conduct of the U.S.-Soviet Contest.* By ZBIGNIEW BRZEZINSKI. Atlantic Monthly Press, $18.95.

[2] See, in ENCOUNTER, various articles by Dr Brzezinski: "Tragic Dilemmas of Soviet World Power" (December 1983); "The International & the Planetary" (August 1972); "Can the Super-Powers Survive? The Soviet Past & Future" (March 1970); and his conversation with George Urban, "The Perils of Foreign Policy" (May 1981).

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This Soviet tactic often has the effect of putting the American executive on the defensive towards its own public opinion, the Congress, and its Allies. It has to justify itself, and finds itself forced to demonstrate that its determination to preserve a margin of security does not mean that it wishes to exacerbate world tensions. Yet, at this stage, the Soviet Union has generally already gained the upper hand by stirring up polemics inside the United States and mobilising sections of American and West European opinion against the US defence programmes.

THUS WE allow the Kremlin to interfere in the democracies' most vital domestic debates; and that is unhealthy, to say the least. Furthermore, the Kremlin is consequently disinclined to make concessions in negotiations, because it knows that with a little patience it has every chance of seeing the plans of the White House collapse of their own accord, just because of domestic pressures. We saw this happen again in August 1986, when among other reductions in the Pentagon budget the House of Representatives cut nearly half of the funding meant for the Strategic Defence Initiative—Moscow's *bête noire* for the last three years.

The campaign waged in the United States and Europe against SDI has made Mikhail Gorbachov's job half as difficult. Yet this campaign is based upon contradictory arguments which have only to be stated (Brzezinski argues) to bring out their inconsistency. Strategic defence, according to its enemies, would be simultaneously technologically impossible to build, prohibitively expensive, easily annihilated by Soviet counter-measures, and also severely destabilising, compelling the Soviets to follow in the footsteps of the Americans and so triggering an arms race in space. As the former White House adviser ironically points out:

> ". . . if it is technically unfeasible, economically ruinous, and militarily easy to counter, it is unclear why the SDI would still be destabilising and why the Soviets should object to America's embarking on such a self-defeating enterprise, and even less clear why the Soviets would then follow suit in reproducing such an undesirable thing for themselves."

These considerations by no means testify that Soviet overtures and initiatives are always traps. That, too, would be too simple. The art of negotiation consists in this very matter of distinguishing the pitfalls from the genuine proposals. Besides, thanks to the firm stance of President Reagan, the Soviets seem recently to have begun to take a few steps in a more serious direction. In return, the US President might envisage the more gradual development of the SDI programme. But imagine how weak the American negotiating position would have been if the Western powers had given way to the Soviets in 1983 by abandoning the development of "Euromissiles"—and if Reagan had given way to Gorbachov at the Geneva summit in 1985 by cancelling the project for defence-in-space! In both cases there was no lack of voices, American as well as European, to advocate these unilateralist concessions. If they had been heeded, Gorbachov would certainly no longer feel the need to hold a summit today.

Hence we would find ourselves much further away from "peace" than we do, for the Soviets would have much less reason for seeking the compromise that they seem to desire at the moment. But this compromise on arms can only be temporary. In the end, Moscow cannot relinquish its quest for military superiority.

Why? Because that is the only superiority it can ever have. The Soviet Union is the first world power in history whose ambitions can prevail by no other means than armed force. Neither in the field of economics or technology, nor through its political institutions, or by virtue of its culture or way of life does the Soviet Empire have anything worthwhile to offer. We find the empires of the past, and the United States today, keeping up equivocal relations with the nations which they control. They find themselves the object of both resentment and at the same time of admiration, a blend of irritation and of imitation. For half-a-century the USSR too could claim to incarnate the prospect of another possible society, a utopian-socialist society far better than liberal-capitalism and democracy.

Now, in the last decades of the 20th century, that is no longer the case. If the two essential attributes of preponderance are strength and prestige, the Soviet Union has lost the latter. It follows that if it were also to lose the former its planetary role would be at an end. The Soviet leaders know that; and because they do, no negotiation with them in the field of armaments—and this is something we must never forget—can ever be purely technical. It puts at stake the vital principle of all their policy—or rather the policy itself, their sole remaining means of extending their influence in the world.

Le Bon & the Unknown Crowd

THE POSTHUMOUS decease of Doctor Gustave Le Bon shows how possible it is for the "*purgatoires*" let alone damnation of thinkers of the past to be gravely in error. Le Bon was a multidisciplinary researcher who wrote about biology, medicine, anthropology, climatology, and microphysics. But his claim to fame derived from a little book he published in 1895, *La psychologie des foules* (first translated into English in 1897 as *The Crowd: A Study of the Popular Mind*). These 132 pages went all over the world, and until World War II they remained obligatory reading for any candidate for the French *baccalauréat* or for electoral office. Then came disrepute and disappearance. Why so?

First, because Le Bon came to be seen as "the Machiavelli of the masses", the intellectual guide of those most evil manipulators of 20th-century crowds, Mussolini and Hitler. (On that account it would have been equally fair to accuse Louis Pasteur of being the intellectual guide of germs and microbes.

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In any case, Le Bon was also read with great attention by Lenin and by de Gaulle.) On top of this absurd political grievance came another, which arose from the preponderance of Marxism after 1945: the masses, guided by class-consciousness, cannot be mistaken; they are in tune with History and march along its path. It is "reactionary" to describe them as giving way to irrational or even suicidal forms of behaviour. Lastly, the development of philosophy after the War led to the rejection of all explanations based upon psychology. The dominant schools, first of Marxism and later of Structuralism, prescribed that social behaviour should be related either to long-term historical processes or to impersonal forms of mental organisation.

Now, the reality singled out by Gustave Le Bon is precisely *la foule psychologique*, an apparently obvious notion but harder to define than it appears. Thousands of individuals may be gathered together in one place and not slip into any kind of crowd behaviour. Conversely, with two dozen participants at a meeting where passions run high, animosity, credulity, caprice, and impatience can get the better of reasoning. French television-viewers recently received from a conference of the *Mouvement des Radicaux de Gauche* an object-lesson which will stick in the memory of every republican.

We know that a gathering, stirred to boiling point by a competent agitator, can come to decisions that none of its component individuals would have taken alone. Scholar and ignoramus are indistinguishable when caught up in that collective exaltation in which (says Le Bon) "the votes of 40 academicians are no better than those of 40 water-carriers". There is no *élitisme* in Le Bon's concept of the crowd.

A human group turns into a crowd when it becomes suddenly susceptible to suggestion and not to reasoning, to the image and not to the idea, to assertion and not to proof, to prestige and not to competence. Within the crowd, a belief spreads not by persuasion but by contagion. These irrational mechanisms have been the stock-in-trade of demagogues throughout the ages. Historians, biographers, and novelists have often described them in action, but no theoretician analysed them with as much precision as Gustave Le Bon.[1] (That was because he also understood Freud, and corresponded with him, at a time when even those Frenchmen to whom the name had some vague meaning were unlikely to know anything about the psychology of crowds.)

LE BON ANTICIPATED how these phenomena could bring about an erosion and even destruction of democracy. In a disconcertingly prophetic article entitled "The Evolution of Europe towards Various Forms of Dictatorship" (which appeared in 1924 in *Annales politiques et littéraires*), not only did he predict a gloomy future for Europe, at a date when the dangers were still hardly visible, but he put forward a maxim which even today is only just beginning to gain painful acceptance, namely "*La dictature de gauche est assimilable à la dictature de droite*".

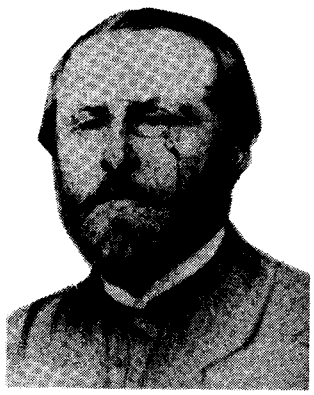
Above all—and it is no exaggeration to call it a stroke of genius—Le Bon earlier still formulated an idea which provided advance explanation of the influence of the audiovisual media, at a stage of the technique which came well before their appearance in practice. He gave warning that the "crystallisation" of the crowd, above all its psychological reality:

> "does not always imply the simultaneous presence of several individuals at the same point . . . thousands of separate individuals may at a given moment, under the influence of certain violent emotions, acquire the characteristics of a psychological crowd."

This was noted in 1895; it is the "global village" which was to be described in 1965 by Marshall McLuhan. In our own decade, when the universal, and very comic, aspiration is to have "said it all *first*", it is sometimes refreshing to come across one of the true precursors.

[1] *Les idées politiques de Gustave Le Bon*. By CATHERINE ROUVIER. Preface by EDGAR FAURE. Presses Universitaires de France.

Rehabilitating Taine



FIRST, HE HAS to be read! With his pedantic, goatee-bearded look, "*Monsieur*" Taine seems the quintessence of the boring theoretician. But in fact he was no great theorist: his general ideas were secondary to his predominant passions, and his true talent lay in resuscitating the atmosphere of past cultural eras in all their unique particularity. Erudition, intuition, and style combine in Taine's work to produce a great cultural psychologist.

Far from being a labouring intellectual omnibus, *The Origins of Contemporary France*, the monumental work which took him the eighteen years from 1875 until his death in 1893 to complete, carries the reader through its 1,700 pages like a high-speed train. Long books are not always the slowest books to read; and there is no denying the pleasure, even exhilaration, which this swift-moving study often provides. As for the thesis it argues, when the book was first published it split France into two ferociously hostile camps; and it does so still.

On the appearance of those parts of the *Origins* that deal with the Revolution of 1789, the Jacobin seizure of power, and the Terror, the Republicans mobilised their forces for a counter-offensive. Charles Seignobos and Alphonse Aulard (holder of *la chaire d'histoire de la Révolution française* especially created at the Sorbonne) set out to prove that Taine was incompetent as an historian. Aulard dissected Taine, tracking down mistaken references. After Taine's death, Augustin Cochin counter-attacked: he established that:

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"out of a sample of 140 pages, containing 550 references, the percentage of errors in Taine was of the order of 3%, whereas in Aulard's critique of Taine it was of the order of 38%. . . ."

It was a spectacular brawl! But Taine, *le grand esprit*, was the posthumous loser of a battle in which Aulard, for all his mediocrity, was the victor. After its great success at the end of the 19th century, the *Origins* remained out of print for 79 years.

WHY SUCH a lengthy disappearance? Taine's essay was seen as having taken on the status of a mere counter-revolutionary weapon, a polemical device. That seems to me to be a misconception, and for two reasons. First, although it is certain that Taine's indictment of the Jacobins is very violent in tone, and sometimes unpleasantly overstated, it is no more damning than previous verdicts on the Terror reached by several historians considered (as Taine himself was, before the *Origins*) to belong to the Left, such as Edgar Quinet and even, more frequently than is commonly thought, Jules Michelet. Secondly, as the title indicates, *The Origins of Contemporary France*[1] does not deal solely with the Revolution. A lot of space is given to the *Ancien Régime* in decline, and later to what Taine calls the "*Régime moderne*", from the beginning of the Napoleonic system until 1880.

WHAT IS MORE, Taine cannot be styled a reactionary in the sense of having argued for a rehabilitation of the *Ancien Régime*. His portrayal of the final decades of the old France, which contains some of the most stunning passages in the book, is a great deal more harsh than that of 19th-century historians more favourable to the Revolution. For Alexis de Tocqueville (and a good many other writers), one feels, it remains an open question whether the right reforms, applied in good time, might have spared the nation its revolutionary spasm, and brought about a peaceful transfer to democracy. For Taine the answer is *non*. According to him, the *Ancien Régime* was no longer viable or reformable. Its poverty was too great, its ruling classes too incompetent, its political system in a state of putrefaction and incurable paralysis. Taine's dossier, therefore, has nothing to do with the kind of case which was later to be argued by Right-wing historiographers such as Pierre Gaxotte.

On the subject of Napoleon Bonaparte and his system (though of course for different reasons), Taine is scarcely more indulgent. His startling portrait of Bonaparte as an Italian *condottiere*, an undoubted genius but foreign to the French tradition, brought him to the notice of unbiased minds and closed the doors of a few salons. Napoleon's achievements, Taine said, were merely transitory; he left behind him a baleful, if ephemeral, legacy.

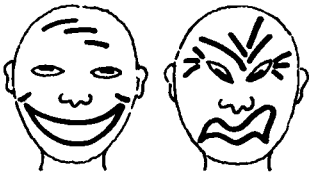
Having simultaneously offended Royalists, Republicans, and Bonapartists, Taine could hardly expect to be greeted with much applause—except from his readers, whom he deserves to regain.

J.-F.R.

[1] *Les origines de la France contemporaine*. By HIPPOLYTE TAINE. Robert Laffont.

Bad Boys' Songs

By Roy Kerridge



TWENTY-FIVE YEARS AGO, in my Brighton coffee bar days, the Whitehawk Boys were a legend of ferocity. Whitehawk was the name of a council estate on a hill, and every so often its young men would pour down into Brighton like barbarian invaders, smash a coffee bar or two, and go back. On the few occasions when I ventured there, I would be recognised as a stranger and jeered at. Once some tiny children greeted me enthusiastically as "grandad". I could only suppose that everyone from outside was seen by them as a grandad. However, as the years rolled on, and the fashion for drugs took its toll, some of my friends were housed in Whitehawk as "problem families". My little godson grew up to be a teenage tearaway himself, holding up sweetshops with an air pistol. ("Hands up! Don't move! Now turn round very slowly and hand me the jelly babies.")

On one visit, when he and his brother were ten and nine years old respectively, I gave up my feeble attempts at Bible instruction and asked if they knew any songs. At once, with great gusto, they began to chant a ditty to the tune of *On Top of Old Smokey*, joined by some of their friends from the street.

I found an old handbag.
I filled it with lead.
I hit an old lady
Bang on the head.

A po-liceman caught me
And asked me my name.
I answered his question
With a bicycle chain.

The judge said "You're guilty,
So please dry those tears.
You're going to Borstal
For five or six years."

My poor mother fainted,
My father dropped dead.
Brother pulled out a pistol,
Shot the judge in the head.

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There's blood on the windows,
And blood on the doors,
There's blood on the ceiling,
And all over the floors.

The tune of *Old Smokey* usually accompanies a song with melancholy or tragic lyrics. Consider, in all their poetic beauty, these lines from *I Never Will Marry*, as sung by the hillbilly Carter Family.

"The shells in the ocean
Shall be my death bed.
The fish in deep water
Swim over my head."

She flung her fair body
In the waters so deep.
She closed her fair eyes
In the waters to sleep.

"Old Smokey" itself is a poignant sight, not one mountain but a whole range, blue with firs and hung over with white mist (or "smoke"). However, back at Whitehawk, one at least of those boys was destined to rob old people in the street, just like the hero of his song. I don't believe that such songs are known to most schoolchildren.

Not all Bad Boys' Songs are from oral tradition, for the next song the group of boys sang, with slightly shamefaced enthusiasm, went like this:

We are National Front.
We are National Front.
Because we're white and Brit-ish,
We are National Front.

All over England, except in immigrant districts, the night belongs to the young. At Thetford, in Norfolk, as in many other places, no one over thirty goes out after eight o'clock at night. That leaves four hours of brawling time, when tough, high-spirited young people swagger round the town from pub to pub, in uproarious mood. Groups of girls and boys, red-faced with drink, shout, swear, sing and laugh in quite a frightening manner. Young men in the car park jump from car roof to roof, while bolts click shut on cottage doors. No adults in provincial towns *admit* they are frightened; there is no name for the new phenomenon of pubs-for-youth-only—you simply go indoors when the young go out.

Thetford's castle mound, with its deep moat and earthen walls criss-crossed with footpaths, is an eerie sight. On my visit, tipsy young men dared one another to run up and down it, a healthy and innocent pastime. But as they ran, they sang, to the tune of *Rule Britannia*:

We love Hitler!
Hitler killed the Jews. . . .

There are more verses, but that is all I could catch. I have heard the same song bawled out in Oxford—an even more frightening place in the evening, as the youth sport punk, skinhead, and Mohawk hairstyles. "Town" feels humiliated and defiant by its contrast to "Gown", and overacts in consequence.

Undergraduates in evening dress and gowns queued to enter a ball, serenaded by a young man dressed in a splendid velvety medieval jester's costume. He played a mandolin, but sang rugby and student songs, known to the old Brighton boys as "dirty songs". When I used to go out on a spree with my mates, we would go singing a song as we marched along—*All coppers are bastards!* A far cry from the Hitler songs I heard from "Town" youth in Oxford. There was more than one such song, but it was hard to hear the words. "*There ain't no black/In the Union Jack*", ran one refrain.

Personally, I blame the Beatles. Until the Fab Four took drugs, became intellectual, and estranged their fans, delinquency was a matter of coffee bars and dance-halls. Traditional working-class pastimes were scorned. When pop music became an unacceptable spiritual guide to most youth, particularly those from council estates, brash, well-to-do teenagers returned to the working class and conquered it. People in cloth caps or curlers fled indoors, and young people took over their pastimes, transforming them with teenage values and turning them into a parody. Ferocious fights such as I once witnessed between rival coffee bars, and then between Mods and Rockers, now take place at football matches. Pubs, football, and even snooker have all undergone the youthful (or hooliganistic) transformation.

A visit to the National Front bookshop in Thornton Heath proved fruitless as a source of Bad Boys' Songs. Many of the pamphlets on sale (together with the works of J. R. R. Tolkien and Geoffrey Ashe) concerned themselves with football, the stalls a recruiting ground; but the song-books contained only art songs, if such they may be called.

Brawling boys and football fans now have a song tradition of their own. Who will be brave enough to collect those songs? I certainly won't do it! But here is a sample, to whet the collector's appetite.

We are the Scots, the Cock of the North,
We hate Wales and England, of course.
We only drink whisky and bottles of brown.
The Scottish boys are in town. Scotland! Scotland!

Hallo, hallo, how do you do?
We are the boys in Royal Blue.
Where e'er we go, we'll fear no foe.
We'll keep the Blue flag flying high.

I collected this the easy way, by copying it off the inside of a wardrobe door in the Liverpool YMCA. A previous occupant of my room, presumably a Scotsman, had written it there with a fountain-pen.

Are there no Bad Girls' Songs? The only one I can think of is *When Susie was a Baby*, the popular clapping rhyme:

When Susie was a schoolgirl, a schoolgirl Susie was,
And she went "Miss, Miss, I want a piss,
And I don't know where the toilet is."

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When Susie was a teenager, a teenager she was,
And she went "Ooh! Ah! Lost my bra!
Left my knickers in my boyfriend's car!"

When Susie was a housewife, a housewife Susie was,
And she went "Wash, scrub, got no grub!
You take the baby, I'm off to the pub!"

TODAY I LIVE in London, and the local notorious council estate, at White City, is a hotbed of traditional songs. But unlike Whitehawk in the 1960s, the White City Estate is as safe as anywhere else. For London is a city tamed by Irish and West Indian immigrants. People of all ages stay out until all hours, and the young have no monopoly of the streets. In a white district you are afraid of the young people you can see; in a black district of the young people you can't. There is a difference between hooliganism and the occasional mugger. Only where native English remain, as at East Ham and in the suburbs, does life seem to be as dangerous as in the provinces. Instead of Hitler songs, White City on a summer night rings with Irish fiddles and West Indian tambourines. Irish pub music and West Indian gospel are the two traditional sounds of London. On one evening, while looking for my sister's flat at White City, I heard a most spirited Caribbean Pentecostal congregation, the electric guitars moaning the sour, insistent notes of the gospel blues. In the "General Smuts", the estate pub, a tough fiddler stamped to the steady rhythm of a drummer, and sawed away at frantic jigs while the customers jived, jigged and waltzed around the smoky room.

The IRA or "rebel" songs so often heard in Irish pubs may seem to be Bad Boys' songs to you and me, but the singers take them very seriously. Dying and killing for "the Cause" is seen as noble and patriotic. A rebel sing-song has a totally different atmosphere to that of a gang of rowdy youngsters on a spree bawling "comic" ditties in praise of Hitler. A collection of "Hitler Songs" might prove a chilling indictment of the way our English youth has been allowed to develop.

Remembering Grandfather

Watching you die
was like seeing an old photograph go brown.

When you smiled you were stiff
and your eyes went all small.

Your handshake was frightening.
Only a man could understand it.

In the old days you would push us on swings—
and still you kept your tie on,

even if it was boiling,
even if you hated it.

Then your ankles started to grow fatter
and you would rattle pills in front of us at tea,

protesting that you were getting better,
that you saw more now than ever before.

But you didn't see it.
That would have killed you.

Everyone knew. Only you didn't.
Only you could prove us wrong.

Your widow lives in a flat now
with a clock named after you.

Often we find her sitting in your
favourite chair, the rocker,

as though waiting for something to happen,
like we used to, swinging.

Anthony Wilson

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Talking French

(Three Easy Pieces)

1. Ideas of Order

The French like turning things round
(for them it would be a horse-cart
and not a cart-horse).

For example:
A push button is a *bouton poussoir*.
If there were something called
a handkerchief-sheep
it would be a *mouton mouchoir*.

2. Please Come To My Assistance!

"Love" sounds less romantic than *l'amour*—
but the three syllables of *Au secours!*
can't be as effective as the Anglo-Saxon yelp:
"Help!"

3. Anglo-French Clerihew

Il n'y a rien d'ignoble
dans notre vignoble—
mais, au contraire, un vin
délicat et fin!

Gavin Ewart

A Letter to One's Publisher

It's the not hearing
That's so very wearing.

We're long past despairing
And into Not Caring—
It's just the not hearing
That's so astonishingly wearing.

We think of the thoughts that you're clearly not sparing;
We think of the Post—*can* you be so cheeseparing?
It's simply and absolutely the not hearing
That really and truly becomes so quite amazingly wearing.

Hours and hours, days and days, weeks and weeks, months and years, we've been merely standing and staring:
Too humdrum for grief, too banal for anger, the long grey depression we're sharing—
Morn after morn, noon after noon, evening into night and the small hours, the not hearing
That's so intensely, excruciatingly, extraordinarily, astoundingly, outrageously wearing.

We feel that we've been, to an extent hitherto unattained by man or beast, patiently forbearing:
Set aside, left behind, put away, on the shelf, all other activities forswearing—
But such waiting and waiting and waiting and waiting and waiting and waiting's no longer for bearing
And such interminably extensive long-stretching and yawning procrastination's most certainly Goddammit matter for swearing—

It's just the not hearing
That's so BLOODY wearing.

John Aiken

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The Intruder

Henry James & "The Turn of the Screw"—By ARNO BOHLMEIJER

"Unfortunately, the mythic side of man is given short shrift nowadays. He can no longer create fables. As a result, a great deal escapes him: for it is important and salutary to speak also of incomprehensible things. Such talk is like the telling of a good ghost story, as we sit by the fireside and smoke a pipe."

C. G. Jung, MEMORIES, DREAMS, REFLECTIONS

AT THE HEIGHT of his career as a novelist Henry James had a go at play-writing, but in the theatre world (Oscar Wilde's territory) he was torn to pieces. After the first night of *Guy Domville* James was led on to the stage—quite unsuspectingly—by an angry actor, only to be hissed off. A few years later (1897) "The Turn of the Screw" was written in three months; it became the subject of one of the biggest wars the literary world has ever known.

The fights concentrated on the narrator, the unnamed governess of two orphans (Miles and Flora), who perceives the "ghosts" of Miss Jessel, her predecessor, and the servant Peter Quint. Although the governess has never met them "in the flesh", her descriptions leave no doubt about their identification. She suspects the ghosts of wielding evil power over her pupils, and she desperately tries to keep the children away from them. This results in strong opposition on the part of the children, who deny the existence of the ghosts. Panic begins: those involved act and react more and more strangely. When, in the last chapter of the book, a direct confrontation between Quint, Miles, and the governess takes place, the ten-year-old boy dies after he has—in mortal fear—pronounced the name of Peter Quint. This is the last piece of information the narrator gives us: "and his little heart, dispossessed, had stopped." James wisely left all commentary to the readers.

One group of critics regards the governess as an angel of redemption, another as a paranoid hysteric who is ultimately to be blamed for Miles's death. The first group cannot but consider the ghosts to be authentic—if, perhaps, in an allegoric sense; the second group regards them as the governess's hallucinations, disregarding the problem of identification. Freudian interpretations were a sensation at the time—"the governess is a case of sex repression"[1]—but failed to settle the matter; the dispute flared up.

The very quantity and vehemence of reactions from readers and critics point to the archetypal impact of "The Turn of the Screw". James himself called it "an inferior, a merely pictorial, subject and rather a shameless potboiler",[2] and repeated this apology with enough emphasis to make one suspicious.

In daily life James lived on his intellect; the most essential part of his nature was repressed and had to find compensatory expression in stories like "The Turn of the Screw". What one of James's critics calls his "unusually intense interest in the supernatural" and another "the disorderly fantasy of 'The Turn of the Screw'"[3] is really James's "personal myth": the instinctive fight against further estrangement from his roots. The more he stresses that "The Turn of the Screw" is a *technical* piece of work and the harder he tries to mystify his readers, especially *after* the work has been published, the more he makes me think of Aniela Jaffé's remark that "the artist is, as it were, not so free in his creative work as he may think he is".[4]

IF WE let Jungian terminology replace "nonsense" by "hidden sense", many a Jamesian mystery will be solved. If we regard "The Turn of the Screw" as a dream or fairy-tale or myth, interpreting the most important characters in the story as archetypes and accepting the "facts" from the text as facts (e.g. that the governess is clairvoyant because she describes the figures she perceives in such a way that the housekeeper recognises them at once), then the literary war may appear to have been altogether superfluous.

Carl Gustav Jung studied the human psyche in its totality,

[1] Edmund Wilson, *The Triple Thinkers* (1938).
[2] Henry James, Letter to F. W. H. Myers, 19 December 1898.
[3] Michael Swan, Introduction to *Daisy Miller and Other Stories* (Penguin ed., 1984); Peter Coveney, *The Image of Childhood* (Penguin, 1967), p. 214.
[4] Aniela Jaffé, "Symbolism in the Visual Arts" in C. G. Jung (ed.), *Man and his Symbols* (1964).

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both consciousness and the unconscious. Unlike Freud, he distinguished not only a personal but also an archetypal collective unconscious.

The deeper psyche expresses itself through the imaginative activity of the unconscious; Jung's entire research was focused on the symbolism of the images emerging during that activity. Henry James's "The Turn of the Screw" is a masterpiece of such imaginative activity. Any products of unconscious fantasy-activity are self-portraits of what is going on in the unconscious. These fantasies may have a personal or a mythic, collective character; both are to be included in a study of "The Turn of the Screw".

Jung called the manifestations of unconscious processes *archetypes*. Although they appear as symbolic images or personifications (in myths and fairy-tales, and often in dreams, we find the archetypes in their most concretised forms), they are the forces that cause neurotic disorders as soon as the unconscious is ignored or denied. Three of the most influential archetypes are of special importance for a discussion of "The Turn of the Screw": *the child*, which is to offer compensation as soon as a consciousness is one-sidedly controlled by one's will or by progressiveness, against one's instincts; *the shadow*, which embodies what we consider to be "inferior", "bad", "unfavourable", "anti-social" . . . ; and *the anima*, the totality of the feminine aspects within the male psyche. As Jung put it:

> "Just as every individual derives from masculine and feminine genes, and the sex is determined by the predominance of the corresponding genes, so in the psyche it is only the conscious mind, in a man, that has the masculine sign, while the unconscious is by nature feminine. The reverse is true in the case of a woman."[5]

The unwanted qualities that are most difficult to control are projected, i.e. transferred to an object in such a way that it seems as if they belong to the object. Jungian research pays special attention to the projection of unconscious tendencies within the arts. Aniela Jaffé: "The artist can often express many things, unconsciously and without awakening hostility, which are resented when they are expressed by a psychologist." This, she concludes, "could be demonstrated even more conclusively in literature than in the visual arts". It certainly can in the case of "The Turn of the Screw", as is witnessed by James's own reactions.

"To find a benign and friendly God, this was to be the troubled quest of Henry James Senior. And it was to leave its mark upon his gifted sons"; thus Leon Edel in the opening chapter of his biography of Henry James.[6]

James's father was considered an "eminently likeable man" with "a serenity like the sun", who was "determined to have the good of you" and "began always by liking"; "but", Edel adds, "hidden hostilities in Henry Senior's nature would escape from the tip of his tongue or his pen". In the meantime, the son was trying to be as good as the god his father was looking for, trying to live in "the paradise of paternal optimism and cheerfulness". According to Ruth Bernard Yeazell in *The Death and Letters of Alice James*,[7] "both the benevolence of the father and the helplessness it induced in the child were characteristic of the Jameses. . . . The very tenderness of the family atmosphere produced a sort of impotence in the children." He suppressed his hostilities, became his mother's favourite son, did not swear or play with rough boys, became the angel of the family, and fell ill without giving trouble to anyone—the boy who was "always giving and never receiving", whose "kindness and devotion are not to be described by mortal pen". Ultimately he would be characterised as "a model of social decorum" and "a recluse living socially in the midst of society".[8]

Shortly before his death the elder Henry, who had been ready to sacrifice property and life for his children's happiness, wrote to his son: "I can't help feeling that you are the one that has cost us least trouble, and given us always the most delight." In fact, young Henry felt so responsible that in his *Notes of a Son and Brother* (1914) he falsified the number of their journeys from one continent to another because they were symptomatic of his father's morbid restlessness. Minny Temple, James's cousin, wrote: "The goodness of that boy passeth human understanding"; at the same time she felt that he hadn't enjoyed himself for several years. This was the child, adolescent, and young adult Henry James, who would once make a boy of ten exclaim "Think me—for a change—*bad!*", whose over-concentration on "good" would produce Quint-like shadows.

According to his biographer, "Henry *adored* Minny", adding, however, that he "wanted only to worship Minny from a quiet and discreet—and we might add, safe—distance. . . . He was too reticent and emotionally withdrawn to be an ardent wooer—to woo at all—too intellectual to accept romance on its own sentient terms." On the whole, there were very few friendships with women of his own age, and whatever friendship there was, there was no intimacy. It is striking how often there is talk of danger, bewilderment, and fear in James's feelings about women; Minny was not the only one he kept at a distance. This was the man who would make one of his young heroines claim, "I'm rather easily carried away".

So there is Leon Edel's theory that James was by nature too intellectual to give way to a love-affair (the possibility that his mind served as a refuge because he had never been taught to cope with his hypersensitive nature, his unusually rich emotional life, is not worked out in the five-volume biography). There is also what J. B. Priestley calls his "sexual ambiguity".[9] Discussing the "concealed eroticism" between

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[5] C. G. Jung, "The Special Phenomenology of the Child Archetype", in Violet S. de Laszlo (ed.), *Psyche and Symbol* (Anchor Books, 1958).

[6] Leon Edel, *The Life of Henry James, Vol. I: The Untried Years* (1953).

[7] Ruth Bernard Yeazell (ed.), *The Death and Letters of Alice James* (University of California Press, 1981).

[8] H. Montgomery Hyde, *Oscar Wilde: The Aftermath* (1963); F. R. Leavis, *The Great Tradition. George Eliot, James and Conrad* (1948).

[9] J. B. Priestley, *Literature and Western Man* (1960).

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two boys in Forrest Reid's *The Garden God*, Peter Coveney adds the following note:

> "It is interesting that Forrest Reid dedicated the novel to Henry James, and by so doing terminated their literary relationship. The book was unacknowledged, nor did James acknowledge any subsequent volume the author sent him. In *Private Road*, Reid himself suggested that James's attitude seemed prompted 'by a strange moral timidity, which refuses to accept responsibility for what deliberately has been suggested'."

Whatever ambiguity Henry James may have wanted to conceal, there is evidence that he was morbidly afraid that the public might somehow share his inner life.

WHEN HENRY WAS six months old, the family moved to England, one of the first places where his father hoped to find his heaven on earth. By the time he was ten (back in New York) Henry had been tutored by a variety of ladies and had been sent to a number of different schools. Sometimes there is little difference between pedagogical freedom and neglect or loneliness; Henry once compared his brother and himself to Romulus and Remus, thrown into the Tiber of life. In the end he was as shy in class as at home.

If father James managed to live in one place for six years, he made sure that the project of moving was being discussed during the whole of that time. When Henry was twelve, they sailed to London and Paris. From there they travelled to Geneva by train and carriage, while Henry had a fever and was stretched out on an improvised couch. As the father could not find a suitable school for his sons in Geneva, they travelled back to London two months later, where they moved three times within one or two months. The children changed teachers as often as they changed houses. After six months they moved to Paris and again changed houses three times. The next year they spent the summer in Boulogne, where Henry became seriously ill with typhus fever. They went back to Paris but were soon confronted with financial difficulties originating in the homeland and left once more for Boulogne, where housing was much cheaper.

At school in Boulogne the children finally had some friends, but the parents found social life too restricted and at the end of one winter season the family sailed back to the States and settled in New England. It was 1858; Henry was fifteen. Hardly one year later the father wrote:

> "I have grown so discouraged about the education of my children here that I have come to the conclusion to retrace my steps to Europe. My wife is completely of the same mind, and though we feel on many accounts that we are making personal sacrifices in this step, the advantages to the children are so clear that we cannot conscientiously hesitate."

They went to Switzerland and Germany, the journey which was to be such an advantage to the children but which Henry consciously omitted from his *Notes of a Son and Brother*

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in order to cover up the whimsicality of his parents ("dear people"). It is amazing how often Henry's "uprootedness" is mentioned in the many books that have been published on his works, and how rarely the psychological consequences are discussed.

At the age of seventeen Henry James found himself studying mathematics at a preparatory school for engineers and architects in Geneva. He did not protest (which surprised him in later years), although it was "mere darkness, waste and anguish". The episode ended as "a deeply-hushed failure" (to one of his best friends, Thomas Sergeant Perry, he wrote that he was "very well"); during childhood and adolescence Henry had perfectly learned to hush things up, and keep up appearances.

According to his parents, the school problems had been caused by his reading too many novels. The more subtle and undermining problem was that they had "got [him] in a manner to agree with them". During his first solitary trip to England he wrote home that he felt "completely comfortable"; in reality, he thought London "hideous, vicious, cruel", and his rooms "an impersonal black hole in the huge general blackness". As Leon Edel observes, "the mask of immobility, the manoeuvre to control the environment, did not always succeed. Sometimes people and surroundings defied control"; but more than the people around him it was Henry James's own unconscious that would defy control.

In his autobiographical book *A Small Boy and Others* (1913), Henry James describes and comments on an "immense hallucination", which his biographer sets in 1910. He dreams that he is asleep while someone is violently trying to break into his room. He is terrified and presses himself against the door on the inside. Then all of a sudden it is Henry who becomes aggressive and forces the door open. The intruder runs.

Jungian psychology distinguishes two very different sorts of dream-interpretation: "the objective level", which connects the persons and images in the dream with the outer reality of daily life, and "the subjective level", which connects all the elements of the dream with the inner life of the dreamer. Both are valuable in psychoanalysis or therapy and can function simultaneously, but in a given situation one of them may be more meaningful than the other. Leon Edel interprets James's famous nightmare on the objective level and suggests the possiblity that the intruder may have been Henry's elder brother William, with a more general sense of fear and family pressure in the background. Edel, however, raises an important objection to his interpretation: "In the wishful dream his conquest was achieved by direct counter-attack, by pursuit. In his life it was he who fled." As a matter of fact there cannot be mention of "conquest" in either dream or life: Henry *chased* the intruder. His life-story points at a much more general suppression of emotions than the Jacob-and-Esau competition.

The fact that the dream is located in his bedroom, that the dreamer is asleep in his dream (a symbolic state of unconsciousness) and is appalled by someone who is trying to rouse him, indicates that we have to do with something highly intimate, which Henry does not want to know about himself. If the shadow has been rejected for some time, it will return as a menacing figure, it will have to attack the ego with violence, in order to save it. All it had originally asked for was recognition.

But the intruder never enters the apparent safety of Henry's room; he is driven away down "the long perspective, the tremendous, glorious hall" of the unconscious. It is characteristic that Leon Edel mentions "persistence" in one breath with "indirection, secrecy", when he discusses James's "conquest". Henry's retrospective "great thought" that he "was probably still more appalling than the awful agent" has profoundly tragic irony.

James's stories confirm the idea that his fight with the shadow filled a central place in his life. And apart from the tales themselves, his notes and comments illustrate even more poignantly what happened in the depths of his psyche. In "The Jolly Corner" the main character goes after the ghost of what he might have been, but faints as soon as he meets him. Coming back to the story in his notebook, James remembers it wrongly and once more tells his own dream, again "winning a sort of victory" over the apparition. Interestingly, he submits to the attacks upon his conscious mind only in his *creative* writing, "his mistress".[10]

By the time Miles and Quint appear on the scene of "The Turn of the Screw", in Chapter Three, it has become clear that the general atmosphere at Bly transcends that of everyday life. It shows the same magnified effects that we find in dreams—daydream or nightmare; there is "all the mystery of nature . . . a charm of stillness—that hush in which something gathers or crouches"; there is the house ("a castle of romance inhabited by a rosy sprite"), the governess ("I was under a charm . . . I saw with greater sharpness"), Flora ("the deep, sweet serenity indeed of Raphael's holy infants"), Miles ("positive fragrance of purity . . . something divine that I have never found to the same degree in any child . . . knowing nothing in the world but love").

When Quint makes his first appearance, the governess experiences a Shakespearean cosmic solidarity: ". . . it was as if all the rest of the scene had been stricken with death . . . the rooks stopped cawing in the golden sky." Miles's dismissal from school lacks any normal explanation and is in strange contrast with his angelic appearance. When the governess mentions the letter to Mrs Grose, the housekeeper has a peculiar look, quickly followed by a blankness, blushing, and tears. There is reason enough for blushing after Mrs Grose's abundant praise of Miles on the previous day. The uncle's letter shows his rude irresponsibility. If the plea to deal with a boring headmaster is justifiable—he might, however, have shown some consideration for the fact that the

[10] Ferner Nuhn, "Henry Adams and the Hand of the Fathers" (1942), in *Literature in America* (ed. Philip Rahv, 1958).

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governess has only just started on the job—the emphatic ". . . don't report. Not a word" seems exaggerated, misplaced and very curious.

It is equally strange that Quint was put in charge of the place and the children: he was a scoundrel who was "so clever . . . so deep" and "much too free". The guardian did not know: ". . . if people were all right to *him*. . . ." This egotism explains the prohibition against reporting and is stressed by the later knowledge that he never wrote to the children. Mrs Grose had not dared to tell him about Quint, and when the governess confronts her with the consequences she bursts into tears and admits that she has never been able to bear it. A little later she adds that she has never seen one like Quint: ". . . he did what he wished . . . with her . . . with them all." Finally she hints: "I imagined—and I still imagine. And what I imagine is dreadful." When, on the day of Miles's arrival at Bly, the governess interviews Mrs Grose, one of them gets into difficulties:

> "'He seems to like us young and pretty!'
> 'Oh, he *did*', Mrs Grose assented: 'it was the way he liked everyone!' She had no sooner spoken indeed than she caught herself up. 'I mean that's *his* way—the master's.'
> I was struck. 'But of whom did you speak first?'
> She looked blank, but she coloured. 'Why, of *him*.'
> 'Of the master?'
> 'Of who else?'"

And when the governess inquires after her predecessor, who died unnaturally young, Mrs Grose tries to evade this inevitable curiosity and anxiety: "I must get to my work." While Miss Jessel's death and its cause remain mysterious and painful, the new governess is in the same situation without having received any information about the circumstances. And it is not the housekeeper who can be blamed.

Concentrating on the so-called dilemma as to whether it is Miles and Flora or the governess who sees the apparitions or suffers from hallucinations, critics generally tend to pass too lightly over the fact that there are fairy-tale circumstances which everybody has to cope with, and which do not originate in one particular mind: Quint's death, Miles's dismissal, the headmaster's vagueness, the guardian's irresponsibility, Miss Jessel's death, Mrs Grose's imaginings and nervousness.

"A great work of art is like a dream", said Jung. "The Turn of the Screw" is an image of Henry James's nightmarish, personal myth.

JUNG ATTACHED great importance to the "eternal child in man". He discovered that a person may get into a serious conflict-situation by separating himself from his original character in the interests of certain ambitions in the outer world (such as James's career as a playwright).

> "He has thus become unchildlike and artificial, and has lost his roots. All this presents a favourable opportunity for an equally vehement confrontation with the primary truth. It is a striking paradox in all child-myths that the 'child' is on the one hand delivered helpless into the power of terrible enemies and in continual danger of extinction, while on the other he possesses powers far exceeding those of ordinary humanity."[11]

Both the helplessness and extraordinary powers of the mythic child are explicitly present in "The Turn of the Screw". That Miles is not victorious in the end is at variance with the usual pattern in the child-myths, which is saying all the more about James's personal myth: he had tragically become "childlike" without making use of the "confrontation with the primary truth".

During Jung's personal confrontation with the unconscious—the crisis that determined the rest of his life and laid the foundations of his psychology—he survived a total breakdown by submitting to the childhood memories that came to the surface. He took up his old favourite game and had soon built a complete village out of stones from the lake shore. He had no idea what he was doing; there was only the certainty that it helped him recover.

The image of the child strongly appealed to James in life and in fiction; in his letters the grown-up Henry still put his head on his mother's lap; after his crisis in the theatre he created Maisie, Miles and Flora, Nanda, and other children or adolescents. But he could only partially or for a short while abandon himself to "the child" and never dared to exclude his rationality altogether.

[11] C. G. Jung, "The Psychology of the Child Archetype", in *Psyche and Symbol*.

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YOUNG HENRY did not swear and curse; he thought all boys were "difficult to play with". Several critics have observed that the dark and wild were absent in his life and fiction, and that he shuddered at anything "common". J. B. Priestley mentions his detachment from the struggle in which most people are engaged:

> "He was the nice polite American who came to dinner, without knowing how close Father had been to bankruptcy with that Australian business, why Mother had so many headaches, why Daughter was sulking, why Son was a little drunk, why the butler and the younger parlourmaid exchanged such glances. . . . True, he was intensely curious, but he was on the outside, not inside the life there."[12]

Miles and Flora of "The Turn of the Screw" had "a gentleness that kept them almost impersonal . . . like the cherubs of the anecdote". The governess, however, suspects that Flora is fully aware of the presence of Miss Jessel: "She kept it to herself! The child of eight, *that* child!" By the time they are about to spot Miss Jessel a second time, she remarks that Flora is not a child but an old woman. After the governess has in vain tried to point out to Flora what she sees, the roles of adult and child seem to be reversed: Flora gives her a look of reprobation as if *she* is the teacher. A little later, her "incomparable childish beauty had suddenly failed", and finally Mrs Grose also admits: "It has made her, every inch of her, quite old." It is not difficult to discern a source of Flora's metamorphosis in Oscar Wilde's *The Picture of Dorian Gray*, one of the classical works about the inevitability of the shadow. Miles and Flora are a symbol of innocence that cannot last by itself, that will have to integrate evil, personified by Peter Quint and Miss Jessel.

IN THEIR attempts to deal with the mystery of "The Turn of the Screw", critics talk about "the curious suggestion of abnormality, the preoccupation with indefinite evil", "naked horror and evil", "the ultimate problem whether evil really and absolutely exists outside of human experience", "the latent horror . . . the terror behind the bland surface of common day". They all refer to "normal" evil that has been repressed into the unconscious, where it takes on abnormal, horrifying and indefinite forms. According to Robert Heilman, critical readers of "The Turn of the Screw" struggle with "the definition of the evil, and the identification of the methods by which the awareness of evil is brought to disturbing intensity". Although none of the critics seems to have been aware of it, this definition and identification are exactly what Carl Jung worked on during the largest part of his life. It is a general misconception to describe the theme of "The Turn of the Screw" as "the struggle of evil to possess the human soul"; it is rather the struggle of the human soul to live with its own evil—the theme of themes.[13]

The governess has probably no idea how sharply she defines this shadow-motif when she mentions Quint's "strange freedom" and feels fixed by "just the question, just the scrutiny . . . that his own presence provoked". She expects an outbreak of "the little natural man" in Miles, i.e. the dark side of life that remains natural as long as it is not rejected.

When the governess spots Miss Jessel on the other side of the lake, she tries to find out what is going on in Flora:

> "All sounds from her had previously dropped; and . . . she had, in her play, turned her back to the water. . . . She had picked up a small flat piece of wood, which happened to have in it a little hole that had evidently suggested to her the idea of sticking in another fragment that might figure as a mast and make the thing a boat. This second morsel, as I watched her, she was very markedly and intently attempting to tighten in its place."

The two pieces of wood have been discussed over and over again; usually critics refer to the Freudian symbolism, using it as an indication of frustrated sexuality in the governess. The image, however, has a much wider range: the fact that Flora turns her back to the water (symbol of the unconscious) as soon as Miss Jessel appears on the other side of it, while at the same time trying to make a boat, is one of the most powerful, if unintentional, images in the story. Flora cannot face the shadow-side of life but is drawn towards it and indirectly tries to work with it—ultimately its power is irresistible. Henry James was doing the same thing: "The Turn of the Screw" is his boat and mast; it establishes an indirect and probably involuntary contact with his unconscious.

Discussing Miss Jessel's appearance with Mrs Grose, the governess gives a beautiful impression of what is going on: the fight between consciousness and the unconscious.

> "'Flora doesn't want me to know.'
> 'It's only then to spare you.'
> 'No, no—there are depths, depths! The more I go over it, the more I see in it, and the more I see in it the more I fear. I don't know what I *don't* see—what I *don't* fear!'
> Mrs Grose tried to keep up with me. 'You mean you're afraid of seeing her again?'
> 'Oh no; that's nothing—now!' Then I explained. 'It's of *not* seeing her.'"

And when she mentions the fixed determination with which Miss Jessel watches the child—"with a kind of fury of intention"—she is describing the hostility of a shadow personality that feels excluded. Compare the paradoxical feeling she has when she is confronted with Quint, who "even as he turned away still markedly fixed me".

The governess represents the part of Henry James that deep inside knows all about the shadow; she is feminine, sensitive, intuitive, and has, above all, the gift of the supernatural. She, too, fights desperately for recognition, and becomes violent when she remains unaccepted. She will reach her goal at any cost, and becomes the embodiment of confrontation; she works for consciousness, integration of the shadow, a synthesis of the masculine and the feminine.

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[12] J. B. Priestley, *Literature and Western Man*.

[13] F. R. Leavis, *The Common Pursuit* (1952); Charles G. Hoffmann, *The Short Novels of Henry James*, Vol. II (1957); Leon Edel, *The Life of Henry James*, Vol. II: *The Middle Years* (1962); Robert Heilman, "*The Turn of the Screw* as Poem", Norton Critical Edition of "The Turn of the Screw" (ed. Kimbrough, 1966).

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"I had seen him [Miles] on the instant, without and within." The narrator of "The Turn of the Screw" is an archetypal figure who has what Jung calls "the absolute knowledge", an instinct, a mythic insight, which is sometimes sinister and unscrupulous, and which often take shapes in the anima. F. R. Leavis writes about a "clairvoyant, moral intelligence", "clairvoyantly moral imagination" in Henry James himself: "a moral fineness so far beyond the perceptions of his critics that they can accuse him of the opposite." This, in its turn, makes one think of the "deeper psychology" that Henry James perceived in Hawthorne, and that T. S. Eliot perceived in both James and Hawthorne: "a kind of sense, a receptive medium, which is not of sight."

> "Compared with James's, other novelists' characters seem to be only accidentally in the same book. Naturally, there is something terrible, as disconcerting as a quicksand, in this discovery, though it only becomes absolutely dominant in such stories as 'The Turn of the Screw'. It is partly foretold in Hawthorne, but James carried it much further. And it makes the reader, as well as the personae, uneasily the victim of a merciless clairvoyance."[14]

The results of this "contact of mind with mind" are disconcerting because they reveal one's shadow-personalities and expose one's most deeply hidden truths—it is the unconscious at work.

Sometimes a crucial phase in the process of individuation (the confrontation and search for balance between consciousness and the unconscious) finds expression in a work of art. If the unconscious presents itself in this way, it is usually a case of unwelcome, irrational information which is incapable of penetrating the conscious mind by itself, repressed as it is. In his article "The Transcendent Function", Jung explains that a so-called bad mood or emotional disturbance is really a painful intrusion of the unconscious. Often it is easy to find all sorts of rational explanations, but just as often these appear to be unsatisfactory. The best way to become conscious of the *underlying* causes is a total surrender to the emotions, e.g. by writing down all the fantasies and associations that come to the surface. If the surrender is complete it is a healing and stimulating process, but James's Preface to "The Turn of the Screw" and comments in his letters show that his intellectual juggling with words undid the results.

RATIONALLY, he recovered from the "bad mood" that followed his embarrassing failure in the theatre, in 1895. In the meantime he had been writing stories about highly unfortunate children, and when Leon Edel comments on "The Turn of the Screw" he says that "James had never written at a greater pitch of intensity". The intensity was caused by the presence of the archetypes; apart from the tormented child and the tormenting shadow, there is the anima—"Whoever identifies with an intellectual standpoint

[14] T. S. Eliot, "Henry James" (1918), reprinted in *Literature and Western Man*.

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will occasionally find his feeling confronting him like an enemy in the guise of the anima", said Jung.

Henry James was both attracted and irritated by his female narrator in "The Turn of the Screw". Normally he did not make use of the "I-person" in long stories, because of the danger of a "fluidity of self-revelation". Throughout his life he felt uncomfortable about the feminine side of his personality; as we have seen, this was closely connected with his general fear of intimacy. It is significant that he thought actors were "self-exhibitionistic": he called Quint an actor several times.

Henry's father used to say to him: ". . . if you would only fall in love it would be the making of you." But he would not, because he could not: he had never learned to be intimate; his emotional life had been uprooted from the start; his sensitivity was not taken care of; it is the "something incomplete and unexplained about James's emotional life", "something, from the beginning, not quite sound, whole and thriving within and below" that critics perceive in the novelist—"this man who, fools said, didn't 'feel'".[15]

Unconsciously James must have been happy with the outlet the governess provided him with; on the other hand she was a threat to his masks. That we find the same sort of ambivalence in literary criticism underlines the fact that we have to do with an archetypal figure: whether a critic regards her as a Christian angel, a symbol of redemption, or as "a castrating female" or "the royal whore Jezebel", depends on the critic's own relationship with his unconscious.[16]

JUNG ONCE TREATED a young woman in whom his colleagues had diagnosed a case of schizophrenia. He decided to examine the patient in his own way and got to know her tragic history, which culminated in her half-consciously watching her four-year-old daughter and two-year-old son drink from dangerously polluted water without trying to prevent it. The girl contracted typhoid fever and died.

Jung uncovered most of the patient's secrets indirectly, with the help of her dreams and his association experiments, and had to decide if he ought to speak openly to her—an enormous conflict of duty and conscience. He recognised the risks; his colleagues rejected any suggestion of the kind. Yet, he decided to venture upon a therapy, and told his patient everything he had discovered, including the fact that she had committed murder. She succeeded in accepting the facts of her situation; two weeks later she could be discharged and was never hospitalised again.

THE THEME of "speaking openly", with conscious recognition of what has been repressed, is central in "The Turn of the Screw". The confrontation between Miles, Quint and the governess resembles a psychoanalytical process with strong effects of transference and counter-transference. Jung often mentions the struggle in which the analyst is tested as much as the patient. He sees the process as a series of conflicts which may demand sacrifices on all sides and during which the analyst is easily given the role of "devil's advocate". "You devil", Miles shouts just before he dies, but the text does not tell us whether he refers to Peter Quint or the governess.

When critics abuse the governess, they often forget to pay attention to Miles's behaviour before she arrived at Bly; he was, after all, expelled from school, which is exceptional for a boy from such a background, and he had not been kind to Mrs Grose. He never talks about his school, his teachers or his classmates; he never asks permission to invite a friend, nor is he himself invited; there is no correspondence with anyone from school.

For a long time Miles and Henry lived behind a façade of innocence and happiness, of "social decorum". Inside they were slowly overpowered by a shadow-personality that corrupted because it was banished. The shadow that James had chased in his sleep came back in "The Turn of the Screw".

MILES DOES NOT SURVIVE. Something beautiful and innocent is confronted by evil and dies the moment it is forced to call this shadow by its name. It might have been "conquered", but the loneliness and severe attacks of melancholia and depression that filled the last part of Henry James's life indicate that he could not manage on his own. It was the phase of his life in which he burnt 40 years of private papers (letters, manuscripts, notes). It must have been his fear of "openly speaking" rather than "sadness", as Leon Edel suggests, which prompted him to this act. Shortly after, he wrote to a friend that he was "easier in mind". It was also the period when he wrote his famous series of Prefaces for the New York edition of his works (1907-1909)—"the narcissistic, looping-the-loop prefaces", William Walsh rightly calls them.[17] If James had once claimed that "the imagination leads a life of its own", in his preface to "The Turn of the Screw" he writes about "a piece of ingenuity pure and simple, of cold artistic calculation, an 'amusette'". Ten years earlier, in letters that immediately followed the publication of the book, James wrote to Louis Waldstein (21 October 1898):

> "As regards a presentation of things so fantastic as in that wanton little Tale, I can only rather blush to see real substance read into them. . . ."

And to H. G. Wells (9 December 1898):

> "Bless your heart, I think I could easily say worse of the T. of the S., the young woman, the spooks, the style, the everything, than the worst any one else could imagine. One knows the most damning things about one's self."

In the letter to Wells he added: ". . . the thing is essentially a potboiler and a jeu d'esprit". It is evident that James was confused and uncomfortable about his own work: the Preface contains some fine literary manoeuvring. In Peter

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[15] Edmund Wilson, *Triple Thinkers* (1938); F. R. Leavis, *The Great Tradition*; Ezra Pound, "Henry James", in *Literature in America*.

[16] Leon Edel, *The Life of Henry James*, Vol. I; Ernest Braches, *Engel en Afgrond* (Meulenhoff, Amsterdam, 1983).

[17] William Walsh, *F. R. Leavis* (Chatto & Windus, 1980).

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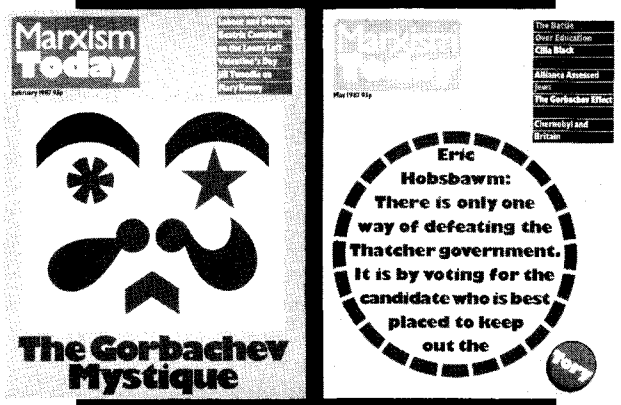
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Coveney's words: "The artistic hands are being very carefully washed. . . ."

WHILE JAMES WAS WRITING "The Turn of the Screw" his imagination had led a life of its own, in spite of the tricks of the trade. Afterwards there came what Jung, in *Memories, Dreams, Reflections*, calls "the attempt to dominate everything by the intellect", which has the dangerous purpose of placing oneself "at a safe distance from the archetypal effect and thus from real experience":

> "The most difficult as well as the most ungrateful patients, apart from habitual liars, are the so-called intellectuals. With them, one hand never knows what the other hand is doing. They cultivate a 'compartment psychology'. Anything can be settled by an intellect that is not subject to the control of feeling—and yet the intellectual still suffers from a neurosis if feeling is undeveloped."

According to Peter Coveney in *The Image of Childhood*, art has been defined as "the controlled neurosis". In his opinion, the lack of control in "The Turn of the Screw" makes it a much less valuable work of art than *What Maisie Knew*. However, what lack of control there is in this piece of "cold artistic calculation" is the best part we have.

That one fictional character should evoke such radically opposed reactions is an effect that even a born writer like Henry James could not possible achieve *consciously*. Here the unconscious plays the lead—both the writer's and the reader's and critic's unconscious. Rarely did a work of art lend itself better to projections. In the course of this century, "The Turn of the Screw" has proved that it possesses the radiation of a classical myth.

Losses & Landfalls

Three Poets—By DOUGLAS DUNN

ANTHONY THWAITE has spent enough time in Japan to have developed what looks like a genuine affection for its people, language, history and culture. Two sections of his new book, *Letter from Tokyo*,[1] focus on Japanese subjects. Longer poems in Part II actually run the risk of dramatising episodes from Japanese history.

A stranger's experience of Japan, though, is at the heart of a poem like "A Word of Advice". The poet is seen attracted by a temple that takes in guests, but the indigenous concern of his hosts is to keep him at arm's length. Other poems, like "Kanji", accept that they are fated to be imperfect translations of experience written at some point during a process of learning. In "Music to My Ears", he indicates the value of encountering languages other than your own:

> *A single quivering string*
> *Excites the desert, or a quavering howl*
> *Means long-lost beauty to another's ear:*
>
> *Barbarian gibberish to an audience*
> *That has never heard the other harmonies*
> *Other feet tap to, deaf to other tunes.*

"I am a citizen of the world, and so are they", Thwaite writes in "Abroad Thoughts from Abroad". Almost everyone believes this, except Kingsley Amis now that Larkin is no longer here. What many of Thwaite's Japan poems seem to be saying is that temporary exchanges of your cultural self with that of another country can never be complete; that its importance—one that he demonstrates—lives in disinterested mutual respect.

Cultural strangeness in "Patterns" is evoked in melodious English verse—the subject hasn't obliged Thwaite to modify previous habits of writing:

> *There is a word for the pattern in things—*
> *The grain in bamboo, the markings in jade,*
> *The lie of an animal's fur, strands in a thread.*
> *Each has its quiddity of patternings,*
> *And none can fade.*

A Japanese instructor seems to speak the poem, pointing out the inadequacies that "gruff barbarians" bring to the understanding of his culture:

> *They cannot penetrate our subtleties,*
> *Our precepts of the Gods and of the shapes*
> *Taken by the divinity that slips*
> *Between us; between our divinities*
> *And theirs—mere tropes,*
>
> *Approximate translations, figures flicked*
> *Inaccurately on a counting-frame.*
> *Ours is a pattern flowing down a stream,*
> *Not to be caught, a language none inflect*
> *And none can tame.*

[1] *Letter from Tokyo*. By ANTHONY THWAITE. Hutchinson, £5.95.

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Ironically, though, it's in English verse that the speaker addresses himself to the special untranslatability of his culture. In "Hiroshima", Thwaite again uses rhyme and metre with a plain but definite distinction: where sentiments can be read in advance (the subject leaves little room for originality) the writing had better be unpredictable.

In Part II, he writes about moments in Japanese history through which some understanding of foreign influences on Japan can be brought out. They range in time from 1620 and a Japanese Jesuit who turns apostate to 1955 and a visit to Japan by a Great Foreign Writer. In some ways this is the Thwaite of *Victorian Voices*—the fiction-making monologuist working over historical evidence to resurrect a voice from the past. Japanese history isn't one of my enthusiasms and it wasn't until "Of Japan at Ten Hours' Sight" that my eagerness picked up again. Kipling speaks:

> *We are sailing out from Tokyo, from the edge of fairyland:*
> *I can hear the baby bugles blowing bravely in my head,*
> *I can see the tiny horses with their midgets on the strand—*
> *And no one now can tuck the toys back in their tiny bed.*

Part III includes the two most perfect poems in the collection. Both "The Dancing Foxes" and "The Bumps" are set in a group of poems about memory, false and true, lucid and vague. They bring out what might be the best of Thwaite's writing—a friendly, unfussy but careful formality and a relaxed colloquial idiom. The effect is vernacular and sentient, but there's nothing fancy about it; it represents a common touch from which mellow or frightened lyricism isn't excluded.

Larkin is mourned in "The Anaesthetic From Which None Come Round". Although neat and affecting, it fails to commemorate its subject without recourse to some fairly obvious re-turnings of Larkin's words and phrases. Other poets are mourned or celebrated, too—Geoffrey Grigson, Sir John Betjeman, and Norman Nicholson. "A Sort of Ballade for a Sort of New Hero" addresses itself to the subject of fame and Craig Raine. It has the affability of the light and occasional, but it might also show the over-reaction of an old master to the ascendancy of a relative newcomer.

JOHN MOLE IS A POET of a lighter touch, although, like Anthony Thwaite, his best effects often stem from the association of a lucid, informal diction with tight formal control. His imagination veers off in less quotidian directions, sometimes from domestic or familiar beginnings.

It's the unusualness of Mole's imagery within plain and ordinary contexts that identifies his best work. When these traits are balanced on airy, fluid rhythms, his writing achieves a memorable if also, at times, an unambitious music. Modesty of aim, though, might not matter much in poetry, or less than is assumed. Humility is a decent virtue, especially when it comes without unnecessary self-effacement, wilful evasions, or the warped pride in the minor worn by miniaturists and trivialisers. Mole's subjects, and the forms through which he addresses them, might not split the sky open, but the natural measure and authentic music of his best poems constitute a satisfying level of achievement.

In the four poems of "Firstlings", from his latest book, *Homing*,[2] he writes with the mysterious lucidity of childhood and an emotional innocence that have been apparent in his earlier work. "First Snow" begins:

> *Whose is this long, unexpected elbow*
> *Resting its white sleeves on the wall?*
> *Is anyone out there when I call*
> *To hear my voice? I have lost my echo.*

And ends:

> *Suddenly all the meanings have gone.*
> *Is someone trying to tell me something?*
> *A bird shakes silver dust from its wing*
> *And the sky goes on and on and on.*

There can be an almost specifically English kind of preciosity about that kind of imagery with its questioning rural or garden voice, but it is a risk Mole takes. In "Moth" he might not escape entirely from bathos, practically unavoidable when an insect speaks, although the phrasing of the poem is beautiful and affecting. It is too nice, perhaps, in the poem's movement from the moth as "Little moonflake, prisoner of glass", to "A ghostly powder/Blown or shaken from your hand" after its death. So it's a moth speaking, and speaking after it's dead or else able to visualise its remains; too much

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for a moth to know! Whether the child's-eye-view of the poem saves it from sentimentality, it is hard to say. In the last child-and-moth encounter I witnessed, the child was chasing the moth with a rolled newspaper. Yet the kindness in the poem is more than valuable; it's a feature of Mole's writing, and I like it.

A worried concern can give Mole's poems a harder edge and centre as well as, in "Toy Bricks", a passionate and cleverly sustained pulse than runs through and forces the shape of his lines:

Take two for the man-child
Fury, to be hurled
At a helplessness marked No
Which is all of your world
And your father's, where nothing is piled
Times nothing into which
Nothing will seem to go. . . .

This is not television. Outside,
Real people stamp their feet
Around a brazier, hugging their shoulders—
Take nothing from nothing, divide
By nothing times police and soldiers.
Jack builds his house on Playschool.
The wolf waits in the street.

As well as being worried, "Toy Bricks" is distinctly worrying, all the more so as its subject is never clearly stated. Instead, Mole presents it embodied in the poem's compelling narrative. Poverty, envy, and television imagery appear as invitations to estrangement and violence and these consequences invited by the negligence of the State.

"From Doctor Watson's Casebook" shows Mole being skilful and maybe even funny—though not to my taste; it's a slight sequence. "Two Jazz Elegies" are authoritative and apt and in other poems (especially "Morwenstow") he demonstrates how well he can write in short lyric lines of two or three stresses, a rare gift these days.

At the end of "A Short History of State Funerals", Mole writes of

. . . the shabby
Terminal disgrace
That time calls History
And which wears our face.

SEAN O'BRIEN's increasingly powerful and angry poetry confronts History head on, its shabbiness, its disgrace, and its topical affronts. More so than in his brilliant first collection *The Indoor Park,* O'Brien's found himself picking up a gauntlet that Thatcher's England has dropped at his feet, and using it to slap its face, not once, but repeatedly.

Many of the lines in his new book, *The Frighteners*,[3] come with built-in megaphones. Whole poems, too, aspire to and achieve a rasping directness of political attack. A chorus of polite voices in "Summertime" says, when faced with news of picket lines being run down by mounted police:

Regrettable. Necessity.
You have to take a balanced view.
That kind of thing can't happen here
And when it does it isn't true.

"Song of the South" is equally explicit. While witty and appropriately savage, both poems find trouble in getting over the hurdle of political light verse. "London Road" falls into the same category. Expertly ballad, it ends:

You poets of the little songs
Devoted to the muse—
You shouldn't be surprised my lads
To find you sing the blues.

"Blues" here has a wider compass than the feelings of which Big Bill Broonzy sang, as the poem—about a confrontation with present-day attitudes among policemen—makes plain.

Aesthetic cavils won't wash with O'Brien's poetry. Political verse and admonitory gestures are part of the strategy of blowing his cool. Disagreeable sensations are the very stuff of his eloquent artistry, and his writing punishes the reader by the extent to which he proves his subject and sentiments deserved and inescapable. In *The Frighteners,* acrimony isn't the result of domestic disequilibrium but of a life embroiled with the major issues and social data of its time. Some critics might react with cosy retrospection: "Oh, yes—Auden." But if Auden's imaginative grasp of big thoughts and pictorialising minutiae seems implicated in O'Brien's poetry, the real influence of pre-1939 Auden is more likely to be the example of his energy.

An essential virtue of O'Brien's poetry is its escape from defeatism. In its appearances of fighting back, it conveys an exhilarating acerbity. He possesses contemporary subjects and reality, leaving nostalgia for radical heroes of yesteryear to the folklorists. His attitudes have no time for "comfy meliorists"; he insists on acknowledging what history exacts in its own time. Of a coat both real and symbolic, he writes:

Be memory, be conscience, will and rage,
And keep me cold and honest, cousin coat,
So if I lie, I'll know you're at my throat.

TRUTH IN ITS social and political dimensions is an easy enough insistence to make but many times more difficult to actually provide without partisan simplicities. O'Brien, however, is too literary a poet to avoid the need of supporting his assertiveness with qualities more imaginative and complicated than those of an undiluted acidity. He is a comprehensive observer and interpreter, but a charge of lyricism runs through his work as well:

Horse-commanding wheat-haired daughters
Natter down the gated lanes
Beneath a roof of hawthorns.
Mist admits them, phantom politesse.
You take the smugglers' road beneath the fields,
Dead ground without the government. . . .

[3] *The Frighteners*. By SEAN O'BRIEN. Bloodaxe Books, £4.50.

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There's also a furious production of stories and a concern with childhood's learning that fails to provide the answers to the present's dilemmas. In "Kingdom of Kiev, Rios Das Muertes", he conjures up:

Lies concerning geography,
The inexhaustible resource
From the era of General Knowledge.

As in many of his poems, the apparent directness of its surface disguises just how inventive the writing is, distracting attention from its weirdness and originality. From "How Ryan Got His Start in Life":

It worried me,
This life without a form to fill.
A clock on a black church said morning—
I looked for a drink and am doing it now,
At this bar where the eggs have been pickled
As long as the taciturn punters,
While afternoon drains out of lunchtime.

From "Ryan's Vocation":

There are no names, no other lives in here,
No talents or good ways of killing time.
What links us is the way we sit and brood
On all what little happens cannot mean,
Like revolution, money or free Bells.
The landlord polishes away the light
Along the bar, then gives it back and stands
Remembering the faces it contains,
As if they'd had the sense to up and go. . . .

O'Brien likes longish verse sentences and movement, carrying socially expressive descriptions and narratives. His distinction appears in how he mixes surprising, vivid observations—like the barman, wiping his counter—with narrative statement, the whole blended with literary tact that keeps the writing going energetically, invention by invention, incident by incident. No sooner do you have a passage of statement or simple description than O'Brien spells it into poetry with a line like "While afternoon drains out of lunchtime. . . ." "Geography" ends with:

Out there is home, a hammered strand
By some unvisitable sea,
Beyond all empire and all sense,
Enduring minus gender, case and tense,
A landfall, past imagining and free.

An earlier poem in the book, "Civilians", notates the horrors of the Holocaust through images of simple, domestic valour:

Brave to have needed a coat,
To have paused in the hall at the mirror,
To brush away dandruff,
To check for a pen.

Curiously affirmative and sentient as these lines are, they are

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Keynes's *General Theory*: Fifty Years On

Its relevance and irrelevance to modern times

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followed by a conclusion that might suggest more of what O'Brien is about.

Be lyrical and serious, they say,
And try to think of history as home.

A rejection of history is unlikely to be intended by these lines, even as an understandable gesture in reaction to the rest of the poem. They criticise the notions of "lyrical" and "serious" as much of the literary world understands them; but "Civilians" and the book as a whole suggest that what O'Brien means is that history ought not to be insulted by contemporary evasiveness and cruel ideology. In "history as home" something like impossibility can be detected, a gesture indicating the repugnance of what happens and the unobtainable ideal of social and personal contentment—that "landfall, past imagining and free".

Where There's a Will . . .

The Oxford or the Stratford Shakespeare?—By ERIC SAMS

BY "THE OXFORD Shakespeare" I mean the subject of S. Schoenbaum's *A Documentary Life* (1975) and the *Complete Works*, edited by Stanley Wells and Gary Taylor (1986), published by that University Press.[1] By "the Stratford Shakespeare" I mean that playwright (1564-1616) as documented in historical sources. The Oxford Shakespeare was carefully educated for ten years and then became a schoolmaster and an actor: the Stratford Shakespeare was removed from school at about twelve to help his father in the family business, and thus became a butcher and a poacher. The former made his début with the elegant and courtly *Two Gentleman of Verona* c. 1590; the latter began with obscure popular plays c. 1583. The most striking disparity is that the Stratford claimant offers a whole dossier of identification, while his Oxford rival has almost none.

I wish to recommend a return to the traditional Shakespeare, the under-educated country boy who grew only gradually from apprenticeship into mastery. I should declare an interest; I have sought in a recent edition to show that *Edmund Ironside*[2] is among the many apprentice works written in the same early style. Other examples are *The Troublesome Reign of King John, The True Tragedy of Richard Duke of York*, and *Edward III*.[3] Such inferences are not novel; they are squarely based on Stratfordian grounds, which are far older and firmer than those of Oxford. Despite appearances, it is the Oxford Shakespeare that entails newfangled notions, and it is there that the burden of proof accordingly rests, unbudged. Was there really ever a mute Swan of Avon who suddenly burst out singing in his later twenties? What other great playwright spent years speaking someone else's lines before writing any of his own? The Stratford Shakespeare needs no such amazing metamorphosis, no such inexplicable time-lag, no such far-fetched literary hypotheses. He left school early, worked for his father and married a farmer's daughter, all before he was nineteen; then he came to London and worked for a theatre company, first on menial tasks and later as an actor but above all as a writer of popular plays.

Those early plays, furthermore, have been clearly identified in editions, catalogues, and other documents for 400 years—thus qualifying for total exclusion from the Oxford *Complete Works*. The Oxford canon contains, conversely, the unheard-of poem "Shall I die?", accepted on the authority of one anonymous copyist c. 1640; and it excludes thousands of words duly certified as Shakespeare's by his close colleagues who edited the 1623 First Folio collection from his posthumous papers. We are now informed from Oxford that all three *Henry VI* plays, and *Titus Andronicus*, may well be collaborations between Shakespeare and others. Act One of *Henry VI*, Part I, is formally handed over to Thomas Nashe, and much of *Timon of Athens* and *Macbeth* to Thomas Middleton. George Wilkins is named as co-author of *Pericles* and John Fletcher of *Henry VIII*, which is retitled *All Is True*. Falstaff in *Henry IV*, Part I, is restyled "Oldcastle".[4]

Just as the Oxford *Life* knows better than the first biographers, so the Oxford *Works* knows better than the first editors. I shall be thought at least equally arrogant if I claim

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[1] *William Shakespeare: The Complete Works*. General editors, STANLEY WELLS and GARY TAYLOR. Oxford University Press, £19.95.

[2] *Edmund Ironside: Shakespeare's Lost Play*, ed. Eric Sams (Fourth Estate, 1985; reissued with revisions and a new preface, Wildwood House, 1986). The New York documents expert Charles Hamilton, author of *In Search of Shakespeare: A Reconnaissance into the Poet's Life and Handwriting* (1985), has recently certified that the British Library *Ironside* MS is beyond doubt in Shakespeare's own hand.

[3] These plays were announced as Shakespeare's in 1611, 1619, and 1656 respectively. *Edward III* has recently been shown to be Shakespearean by Eliot Slater (in a book to be published by Cambridge University Press), by Richard Proudfoot (in a British Academy lecture, 1985), and by John Kerrigan (in his New Penguin Shakespeare edition of the *Sonnets* (1986), pp. 293-95.

[4] See the *Complete Works*, pp. xviii; 173; 997, 1,099; 1,167; 1,343; 509-41.

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to know even better still. But all this Oxford expertise lies in literature, not in the interpretation of historical evidence; and that evidence utterly fails to fit the preconceived Oxford picture of the genteel Shakespeare. Thus, on the facts as recorded in manuscript documents, the poet's father John was variously a landowner, yeoman, farmer, glover, whittawer (i.e. dresser of hides and skins), dealer in wool, timber and barley, and butcher.[5] The Schoenbaum *Life* neglects the land; it seems to like leather and loathe butchery. This bias is buttressed by awarding John a "seven-year apprenticeship" as a glover, and then (*A Documentary Life*, p.14) passing "stringent regulations" (which I have failed to trace) forbidding him to be a butcher; no evidence is cited for either claim. In extant county archives he is described as *agricola* (i.e. landtiller or farmer). But "perhaps this is a mistake"; in other words, why are they calling my glover a farmer? His shop was always known as the Woolshop; but "why wool, when he worked in leather?". Further, "the early biographers persistently refer to him as a wool-stapler", as if that were somehow unreasonable of them; why, that is, are they calling my glover a wool-merchant? After all, his very extensive fleece-dealing *must* have been merely "subsidiary", because he was a *glover*. That is why his son's later allusions to that wholesome trade are so well-informed. So Shakespeare's harrowing obsession with butchery would have derived from observation "in Snitterfield, where his Uncle Henry farmed" rather than his own backyard in Stratford where his own father John farmed.[6]

SUCH SELECTIVITY does not derive from reasoned discrimination among sources. On the contrary, it relies on personal preference within sources. Thus, on Schoenbaum's own showing, the archives may err in recording "agricola" but not "whittawer", which can be stretched to fit like a glove. Again, "we should not casually dismiss" John Aubrey's assertion, c. 1680, after consulting an acquaintance whose long-dead father had acted with Shakespeare c. 1598, that the poet had been a country schoolmaster in his younger years. Yet the same Aubrey's earlier information, direct from the Stratford neighbours, that the young Shakespeare had helped his father as a butcher, and would kill a calf in a high style and make a speech, may safely be dismissed as "ludicrous", "legend", "anecdote", "mythos", "local lore", the "butcher-boy story", "gossip" and "confusion".[7]

In the Oxford *Documentary Life*, such attitudes are presented as scepticism; but they are surely just prejudice. No good judge jeers at the witnesses, or tries (p. 60) to explain their testimony away, thus: "does there lurk in this account an obscurely disguised recollection of the boy Shakespeare taking part . . . in the Christmas mumming play of the killing of the Calf?". Rational readers may rate this baseless conjecture as much more ludicrous than Aubrey, and anything but sceptical. Few English countrymen of any period would confuse killing with mumming, or speech with mime. Further, Aubrey has some independent confirmation. He also reports that Shakespeare came to London at about eighteen. In 1693 a visitor to Stratford was told by the parish clerk that "Shakespeare was formerly in this town bound apprentice to a butcher but that he ran from his master to London". In the Oxford *Life*, this too is duly disparaged as "a familiar misconception", "implausible gossip" and "parish clerk's gossip".

The same top-lofty tone is taken about the so-called "legend", found in four separate sources, that the young Shakespeare fell foul of local law and landowners by poaching deer and rabbits. Here too there is talk of his flight to London, where he is said to have earned money by tending playgoers' horses. "Shakespeare the Deerslayer" is first derided and then safely explained away as mere "sports and recreation", if anything. The ostler story is allowed even less authority, although its source (William Davenant) admittedly knew Shakespeare well in the Oxford of his own day.[8]

FROM THE STRATFORD standpoint, however, the butcher, poacher and ostler all look like the same local lad, who according to Aubrey was given the calves to kill "when he was a boy". This too is corroborated by Shakespeare's first detailed biographer Nicholas Rowe. On the basis of enquiries made in Stratford by the actor Thomas Betterton, Rowe reported that Shakespeare's father was forced by poverty to withdraw his son from school to help at home, so early that "he could give him no better education than his own employment". In the archives, John Shakespeare was sued for debt

[5] For John Shakespeare's ownership of many acres, including crop and pasture, from 1556-68, the best recent account is by W. Nicholas Knight in *Shakespeare's Hidden Life* (1977), pp. 50-61. The *Documentary Life* account (pp. 37-38) is defective, e.g. in overlooking the 1589 records.

In 1579, and again in 1597, John Shakespeare is recorded as a yeoman. See the documents described in *Shakespeare's Birthplace Catalogue* (ed. Wellstood, 1944), pp.25, 28.

For the various occupations as farmer, glover, whittawer, dealer in wool, timber, and barley, see the documents described or reproduced in *A Documentary Life*, pp.14, 27, 58. On p. 29 Schoenbaum adds that John Shakespeare "probably dealt in other agricultural commodities as well", and mentions that in 1572 a glover owed him the very substantial sum of £50.

[6] See *A Documentary Life*, pp. 27, 60.

[7] The Aubrey manuscript is conveniently reproduced in *A Documentary Life*, p. 58. See also pp. 59, 60, 87.

[8] *A Documentary Life*, pp. 72-87, 116.

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in 1573, after facing accusations of illegal wool-dealing. By 1576, as the *Life* itself tells us, he had "fallen on hard times". We may therefore reasonably infer that the Stratford William left school at about twelve if not earlier. The Oxford William, however, "we need not doubt. . . received a grammar school education". In this whimsical methodology the presence of evidence compels scepticism while its absence inspires confidence.[9]

IN REALITY, we need not doubt that a Tudor farmer would slaughter livestock for meat, leather and wool and then make and sell harness, gloves, shoes, clothing and the like. John Shakespeare was certainly a wool-dealer and a glover; but such trades obviously depended on animals and were therefore uncertain. Further, he was a Catholic, and hence liable to discrimination and persecution from rivals or enemies.[10] Of course an eldest son would leave school to help his parents and siblings in adversity, and even turn poacher at need. Deer and rabbits were food and raw material. Life was very far from "sports and recreation" for the young Shakespeare, who already at eighteen had a wife and child of his own to support. The care of horses would be an apt first job for a country lad in London. No doubt he had also been a teacher; but his reading and writing skills could be far more lucratively employed. Stage plays were a new genre, in clamorous demand; such a talent could excel in any required style. "His plays took well", said Aubrey, after due enquiry. Rowe said the same, of the same early period; the young Shakespeare was soon distinguished as "an excellent writer".

A further related fact, well known to both those early biographers, as each of them independently states in exactly the same terms, was Shakespeare's "little Latin", which plainly implies a lack of formal education. Already in 1592 Robert Greene had called this same Stratfordian a "rude groom" and a "peasant". In Sonnet 78 the poet himself confesses to earlier "heavy ignorance" and "rude ignorance". In 1615, Francis Beaumont tells us that the Bard's best lines are not only free from "scholarship" or "learning" but "show / How far sometimes a mortal man may go / By the dim light of Nature". In 1619, Ben Jonson confided that his admired friend "wanted art"; in 1623 he memorably mentioned the dead Swan of Avon's "small Latin and less Greek" as a deliberate compliment in a loving eulogy, to show how genius could transcend such deprivations. For Milton, the Stratford Shakespeare was "fancy's child", whose "native woodnotes" contrasted with "slow-endeavouring art"; for another eulogist, Leonard Digges, he was "without art" and had "nature only". "His learning was very little", wrote Bishop Fuller. John Ward, vicar of Stratford, noted: "I have heard that Mr. Shakespeare was a natural wit, without any art at all."[11] Aubrey uses the same phrase: "natural wit". As all these comments confirm, "art" meant tuition as distinct from intuition. Shakespeare himself, his contemporaries, and his commentators for generations, all declared that he was essentially self-taught.

NO WONDER this handicapped genius began with undemanding popular plays; what else? So he cannot be the Complete Oxford Shakespeare, who would have been "more thoroughly trained in classical rhetoric and Roman (if not Greek) literature than most present-day holders of a University degree in classics".[12] This not only ignores all the evidence but mistranslates Jonson's "small Latin" as mere snobbish disparagement. The wilful rejection of this vital key leaves the Stratford Shakespeare locked out of the Oxford *Works* as well as the *Life*.

BUT WHO WROTE *Hamlet*, for example? By 1589, Thomas Nashe knew of a popular play on that theme. He derides it as derivative; he says that its author lacked Latin. A famous popular play called *Hamlet* was staged by Shakespeare's own company at Newington Butts in 1594 and again at their own Shoreditch theatre by 1596. Gabriel Harvey, in the margin of a book he acquired in 1598, commended Shakespeare's *Hamlet*.[13] An inferior 2,200-line *Hamlet* "by William Shakespeare, as it hath been diverse times acted in the Cittie of London", again by his own company, was published in 1603 by Nicholas Ling. The great 3,800-line *Hamlet* "by William Shakespeare, newly imprinted and enlarged to almost as much again as it was" appeared from the same publisher in 1604.

From such facts, Stratfordians infer one single hand practising its craft over the years, shaping and reshaping. The Oxford editors (p.735) far prefer what they candidly call "our belief", as follows. Shakespeare's *Hamlet* was first

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[9] Nicholas Rowe, "Some Account of the Life etc of Mr. William Shakespeare", in Shakespeare, *Works*, ed. Rowe (1709), vol. I, pp. ii-iii; Rowe's words are not cited in *A Documentary Life* (see pp. 36, 50, 60).

The archival records are described by David Thomas in *Shakespeare in the Public Records* (1985), pp.2-3.

[10] *A Documentary Life*, pp. 41-46; see also Peter Milward, *Shakespeare's Religious Background* (1973).

[11] Robert Greene, *Groats-worth of Wit, bought with a million of Repentance* (1592), sig. A3^{v}; the *Documentary Life* reproduction on pp. 115-16 omits the "peasant" reference. Francis Beaumont's comments are cited in E. Chambers, *A Short Life of Shakespeare* (1933), p. 216. Ben Jonson, in his *Conversations with William Drummond*, of 1618-19; see also *Jonson* (ed. Donaldson, 1985), p.596; these words are not cited in *A Documentary Life*. The eulogies of Shakespeare are conveniently reprinted in the *Complete Works* at pp. xliii (Jonson, 1623), xlv (Milton, "An Epitaph. . .", 1630), and xlvi (Digges, before 1638) respectively. See also Milton "L'Allegro", c.1630. Bishop Fuller, in *Worthies of England* (1662); these words are not cited in *A Documentary Life*. John Ward, MS notes 1661-63, when Shakespeare's daughter Judith was also living in Stratford.

[12] *Complete Works*, p.xiv.

[13] Thomas Nashe, Preface to Robert Greene's *Menaphon* (1589), sig. A4. For the Newington Butts *Hamlet*, see *Henslowe's Diary, 1592-1603* (ed. Foakes and Rickert, 1961), p.21. *Hamlet* "belonged to the Chamberlain's Men" (see, e.g., G. B. Harrison, *Elizabethan Plays and Players*, 1956, p.137); Shakespeare joined that company in that year (*A Documentary Life*, p.136). For the Shoreditch *Hamlet*, see Thomas Lodge, *Wits Miserie* (1596), sig. H4^{v}; he specifies a performance at The Theatre, the name of the Chamberlain's playhouse. For the Gabriel Harvey comment, see F. S. Boas, *Shakespeare and the Universities* (1923), pp. 256-60.

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written c. 1600 and published in 1604. By then, he had revised it into a new version, first published in 1623. The 1603 edition represents a very imperfect report from the memories of actors who had performed minor roles in an abridged version of that revision. At first glance, which is all that most readers and reviewers can spare, that may seem sound and scholarly. In fact, however, the c. 1600 first *Hamlet*, its necessary pre-1603 "revision", the "abridged version" of that revision, the "performance" of that abridgement, the "actors" of that performance, the "report" of those actors, and the "roles" and "memories" behind that report, together with full supporting cast of ancillary assumptions, are all just imaginary, not to say hallucinatory. Not a sliver of objective evidence has ever existed for any single one of them.

They are also totally incompatible with the known facts; thus the hypothetical actors are required to have remembered the name Polonius as "Corambis". Rational readers will surely therefore reject such theories in favour of the economical explanation that Shakespeare wrote all known *Hamlets* (including, c. 1589, the early popular version).

But this is academic anathema, for one simple reason. The Stratford butcher-boy has been ousted by the Oxford scholarship-boy, who was far above the earliest extant *Hamlet* or any such inferior writing. This neo-Baconianism adds literary to social snobbery. Just as a poor man could come to write great plays, so a great man could have written poor plays. Even the Oxford Shakespeare (p. 881) admits poor poems, accepted on the authority of a publisher or a copyist. But exactly these same criteria also authenticate the early popular plays on the themes of King Henry VI, King John, the Shrew, and Hamlet.

SUCH COUNTERPART VERSIONS occur solely with Shakespeare. Common sense insists that they are all effects of the same cause, namely his hand at work. Yet the Oxford editors offer as many different complex explanations as there are pairs of plays, and indeed several incompatible explanations for the same pair. Thus the obscure *Taming of A Shrew* first published in 1594 and the famous *Taming of The Shrew* first published in 1623 are two entirely distinct treatments of the same theme. The latter's separate Oxford edition (1982) claimed it as the earlier of the two—despite the 30-year dating disparity—and *A Shrew* as a "memorial reconstruction" of it made by its actors, who had inexplicably forgotten almost every line of it as well as its plot and location and the names of its characters. When this was shown to be absurd, the paperback reissue switched to "adaptation", though only on the back cover. In the *Complete Works, A Shrew* has changed again, this time into an anonymous "imitation" of a supposedly popular Shakespeare play which as far as any actual evidence goes was not published, performed, mentioned or indeed written until many years later. Yet no fewer than sixty lines from this alleged "imitation" are now included in the *Complete Oxford Shakespeare*, because a hypothetical plagiarist's hypothetical imitation may have derived from his hypothetical attendance at a hypothetical performance of a hypothetical lost variant version of a hypothetical pre-existing play.[14]

These academic fantasies, like their *Hamlet* counterparts, are surely self-refuting. Everyone else who reads those lines from *A Shrew* printed in the new *Complete Works* will soon see the real reason for their inclusion, namely that (as even the Oxford editors concede) they are unmistakably Shakespearean in origin. The simple rational explanation is that he wrote them, and therefore also wrote *The Taming of A Shrew*, the actual extant early popular play of which they form an integral part. That would explain why that play was not only attributed to him by booksellers and publishers[15] but performed by his own company in 1594 together with the early popular version of *Hamlet* and also *Titus Andronicus*.

Again on the Oxford editors' own showing, Shakespeare was an assiduous reviser, even of his mature masterpieces. So *a fortiori* he would rewrite his own apprentice plays, even more radically. By the Oxford editors' own criteria of acceptability, these plays include *A Shrew*, *Hamlet*, and others in the same style from the so-called Lost Years (c. 1583-92). But those are the very plays that these same editors tirelessly explain away as "memorial reconstruction", "reportage", "adaptation", "imitation", "derivation", "piracy", "plagiarism", "collaboration", "source-material", and so forth,[16] all without any evidence and for no reason whatever except that their Shakespeare could never conceivably have written in any such style.

AND OF COURSE they are right. They just happen to have the wrong Shakespeare, inherited from the *Life* and reprocessed in the *Works*. It is time for the real Shakespeare to stand up and testify in his turn that the highly sophisticated *Two Gentlemen of Verona* could hardly have been a very first work by one countryman of Stratford, even given the best will in the world. He needed his extra decade of development via early plays after an early start. Of course his apprentice style would be less familiar; of course his revisions would retain traces of it. But that is no reason for calling him such names as "George Wilkins" and "Thomas Nashe" in defiance of his earliest editors and common sense alike. The dating, genesis and text of the Oxford *Complete Works* are therefore in urgent need of radical reappraisal. So are their stylometric computer programmes, their *a priori* assumptions, and their general methodology.

In short, the so-called *Complete Oxford Shakespeare* should itself be revised, into the really complete Stratford Shakespeare.

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[14] *The Taming of the Shrew*, ed. H. J. Oliver (1982), p.22, and the back cover of the 1984 paperback edition. See *Complete Works*, pp. xxx, 29, 60-61.

[15] See, for instance, the Rogers and Ley catalogue of 1656.

[16] *Complete Works*, passim.

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Books Encountered

The Oxford Book of Canadian Short Stories in English. Selected by MARGARET ATWOOD and ROBERT WEAVER. Oxford University Press, £15.00.

Rich and handsomely produced collection of 41 outstanding stories from very varied pens. At one extreme, Stephen Leacock and Charles G. D. Roberts; at another, Katherine Govier and Bharati Mukherjee. Favourites include Alice Munro's "The Peace of Utrecht" and Norman Levine's "We All Begin in a Little Magazine".

Nye Bevan and the Mirage of British Socialism. By JOHN CAMPBELL. Weidenfeld & Nicolson, £15.95.

Revisionist, unauthorised biography, pointing out its subject's faults and follies (e.g. belief in the Soviet Union as a brilliant planned economy) and showing how his Socialist vision was undermined by "affluence", but vindicating his concern that politics should not be trivialised—and that Parliament should be televised.

Reflecting Men at Twice their Natural Size. By SALLY CLINE and DALE SPENDER. André Deutsch, £9.95.

Convincing, impressionistic, amusing, but not very systematic documentation of the ways in which women are *still* expected to act as courtiers in a male world. Jokes include cartoons and examples of Sally Cline's once obligatory down-market chit-chat column, which revealed more about pop journalism than about sexual inequality.

The Pathology of Power. By NORMAN COUSINS. Norton, £12.50, $19.50.

Passionate polemic against deterrence by overkill capacity, arguing among other things that the Strategic Defense Initiative would not be watertight and so is based on "pre-atomic thinking"—i.e. the belief that nuclear war would be survivable. Cousins's solution: world law. No doubt; but how? Even George F. Kennan's Foreword doesn't say.

Looking Out, Looking In: Profiles of Others and Myself. By SUSAN CROSLAND. Weidenfeld & Nicolson, £10.95.

Intoxicatingly readable newspaper profiles by Tony Crosland's widow and biographer, earlier known as Susan Barnes. Subjects range from Garret FitzGerald, Shimon Peres, and Peter Carrington to Nancy Reagan, Martha Gellhorn, and A. N. Wilson—which perhaps explains why they lack *New Yorker* length and detail.

The Greening of Africa: Breaking Through in the Battle for Land and Food. By PAUL HARRISON. Paladin, £4.95.

Sponsored by the International Institute for Environment and Development, this plausibly and practically pleads for soil-conserving, intensified local agriculture, reducing population pressure, and improving health and other education. Aid and cash crops will still be needed, but not as the main solution: small is beautiful is low-tech.

A Lesser Life: The Myth of Women's Liberation. By SYLVIA ANN HEWLETT. Michael Joseph, £12.95.

Stinging account of the difficulties facing "superwomen" working mothers—worse in the USA than in Europe, where motherhood is more often seen as patriotic duty, helped by leave and allowances, and where working women more easily avoid the male clone image foisted on their American counterparts by crude early feminism.

Amadeus: A Mozart Mosaic. By HERBERT KUPFERBERG. Robson Books, £10.95.

Not another biography, but general essays on aspects of Mozart's life, by the former record columnist of the *New York Herald Tribune*, now senior editor of *Parade*. On Peter Shaffer's eponymous play and film, Kupferberg is tough, corrective, but finally indulgent: "a dubious text . . . redeemed [in the film] by a glorious score."

The Frontiers of Paradise: A Study of Monks and Monasteries. By PETER LEVI. Collins Harvill, £12.00.

Again, less a history than scholarly, inward essays on aspects of monasticism in many climates, cultures, and confessions. For 28 years a member of the Society of Jesus, Peter Levi is alert and sympathetic; as a poet, he feels and conveys monks' "silence of the spirit": "They become like good children playing at being good."

The Jesuits: The Society of Jesus and the Betrayal of the Roman Catholic Church. By MALACHI MARTIN. Simon & Schuster, $19.95.

The subtitle says it all. The author, another former Jesuit, claims that under its 27th Father General, Pedro de Arrupe y Gondra, the Society has embraced Leftist "liberation theology" and mounted an assault on both capitalism and the Pope. Tensions there are in the Church: but much of this seems bogeyman stuff.

Kaffir Boy: Growing Out of Apartheid. By MARK MATHABANE. Bodley Head, £12.95; Pan, £3.50.

Accounts of escape from repressive systems sometimes flatter the system by stressing the escape route. This does not: how many children of illiterate parents in a Johannesburg black ghetto could win tennis scholarships to the USA? Sharp, vivid, effectively understated, Mathabane's memories are gripping as well as moving. He had to leave his family behind.

The Master Terrorist: The True Story Behind Abu Nidal. By YOSSI MELMAN. Sidgwick & Jackson, £12.95.

Pessimistic (i.e. realistic) assessment of state terrorism, not restricted to its central subject, by a leading Israeli journalist. Piecing together a credible account of the Abu Nidal organisation's exploits, the author concludes that the West must internationalise its counter-measures but can hardly hope for a decisive win.

A Travellers' Guide to Roman Britain. By PATRICK OTTAWAY and MICHAEL CYPRIEN. Routledge & Kegan Paul, £9.95.

Crisply (black-and-white) illustrated gazetteer to leading sites, including short essays on the Celtic natives, the Roman army, roads, emperors, towns, daily life, public buildings, baths, temples, villas, and burials, plus a map, glossaries, a booklist, and a list of custodians. Just the book for an informative holiday.

The Vision of Anglo-America: The US-UK Alliance and the Emerging Cold War. By HENRY BUTTERFIELD RYAN. Cambridge University Press, £25.00, $34.50.

Interesting re-examination of the so-called "special relationship", stressing among other things Eden's role in recognising the Cold War, Britain's endeavour to enlist the USA to forestall its own decline into a secondary power, and the alleged contribution this made to superpower confrontation. Largely based on a Cambridge dissertation, the book carries more documentation than conviction, and deals with the European option in just two pages—rather as Britain did at the time.

Only One Earth: Living for the Future. By LLOYD TIMBERLAKE. BBC Books/Earthscan, £12.95.

Glossy but well-substantiated accompaniment to a 14-part TV series on BBC-2, underlining the dangers of "development" when it means unsuitable advanced technology, tied aid, export crops, erosion and pollution, and giving graphic examples of "sustainable development", conserving natural resources, in Africa, Sri Lanka, Peru, China, and elsewhere.

R.M.

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CINEMA

A Ghetto in Babel

Revisiting Lanzmann's "Shoah"—By PAUL COATES

SHOAH, a relentless, self-righteous, sometimes impressive but (overall) complacent film, has unfortunately become "important", if only because of the terrible significance of the events it alludes to; and so it is unavoidable. Just as a denizen of the late 19th century who wished to acquaint himself with the course art was taking would have had to subject himself to an opera by Wagner, so one has to sit through *Shoah* in order to understand what sort of motives have led so many recent film-makers into gargantuan semi-epics. One may emerge numbed, however—numbed by repetitive concentration on the technical details of timetables for trains to, from, and around Treblinka; numbed by automatic reiterations of images of trains coming or going, or the camera tracking through areas of forest where the railway line to Treblinka once ran.

Repetition is a primary feature of the film, which thus builds into itself its own remake. (I suspect that one of the reasons for the prevalence of this sort of movie-making is a directorial fear that once the project has gone no other will be in the offing; finance is hard to find, and a project, once secured, has to be milked for all it is worth.) Not only does Claude Lanzmann have a tendency to allow his interviews to run too long, but he has a disinclination to cut at all, favouring "natural time" instead. How then—since all films are edited—are we to know whether or not the apparently natural time really *is* natural?

This is, of course, the problem of the "natural time" aesthetic in all documentaries—but Lanzmann even tends to prod his interviewees after the interview has effectively ended and could valuably be cut at that point. At one point in the film the barber Abraham Bomba is being interviewed, and suddenly refuses to continue talking: his memories are clearly unspeakable. In a film of such epic length, the reticence of a cut at this point would have been very powerful. But Lanzmann tells Bomba he has to continue. (Why the compulsion? Lanzmann at times arrogates a God-like position to himself.) When, several minutes later, Bomba finally manages to speak a few words he is still so traumatised that his articulation is barely comprehensible. The passage showing this lengthy harrowed silence would best have been omitted, on both human and aesthetic grounds.

The most important source of repetition, however, is the use to which Lanzmann puts his interpreters. In the Polish scenes in Part One, he himself poses questions in French which are then turned into Polish by his interpreter Barbara Janica; the replies come back in Polish and are then translated into French for Lanzmann's benefit. So although, interestingly enough, things are only subtitled *once*, everything is *said* twice. What is more, it is only the words of the *interpreter* that enjoy this privilege. And this reflects a general tendency of the film—towards a certain distortion of original statements, or attempts to discredit them whenever they go against Lanzmann's own fixed, and sometimes very narrow, notions of the fashion in which events unfolded.

DISTORTION. There are times in *Shoah* when the interpreter either interprets something before it has been said, or interprets something that has not been said at all. Neither of these practices enhances confidence in the film or the film-maker. Thus, at one point, a Polish railwayman tells of a Western Jew being transported to Treblinka (in the "better" conditions Western Jews enjoyed, since the Nazis were at pains to maintain their victims' belief in the illusion that they were merely being "resettled"). He had descended from the train and was told by some Polish railway workers, who had spotted him running to catch the train again, that it was bound for an extermination camp. This is all the interpreter translates. She omits the final sentence, which lets us know that the forewarned Jew was able to make his escape. The implication of what she *does* translate is of Poles gloating over the fate of the Jews.

At this point Lanzmann's patent disbelief in any detail that

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complicates his simplified image of the Final Solution comes into play. During the first half of the film there are many references to Poles making a throat-slitting gesture to Jews in the transports. The insinuation is that the spectators are utterly callous. Lanzmann's tone over-generalises, however. The possibility that in some cases the gesture took the place of forbidden words, or conveyed a warning when words could not reach the Jews (the train was too far away, its noise was too great), is never even entertained.

Lanzmann reads the sheer naive pleasure many of these peasants feel in being interviewed as evidence of insensitivity. If they laugh while they speak, it can only mean that they are moral idiots. This is indeed clearly the case with some of Lanzmann's interlocutors, whose precise tone of jocularity is fortunately untranslatable. But it is something close to sheer self-righteous monomania to rule out the influence of other factors too: all these things occurred a long time ago; it may be pleasant to reminisce about one's youth; and it's certainly not every day that one has the opportunity to unbutton in the presence of a man from the West with a camera.

Although some clearly *were* morally obtuse (though Lanzmann never asks why—never considers in general the nature of peasant culture, and of rural life), *Shoah* implies that *all* were. The harrowing scene in which a man breaks down as he talks of his grief at seeing a Jewish mother shot through the heart is kept very short indeed, and tends to be outweighed by the outpourings of other, more garrulous, peasants. In seeking out the garrulous (the more words the better, of course, since they stretch the film to the proper "epic" length), Lanzmann is looking for the verbose and the self-satisfied, though it is almost perverse of him to do so in a *film*, which need not depend exclusively on words.

LANZMANN PRESSES his Polish peasants far harder than he does the Nazis he interviews with a hidden camera—as if vague complicity were worse than direct participation. (It certainly gives him a "new" angle on the theme of the camps, however, and this may have been the intention.) His condescending attitude to the peasants is partly a class one. He slouches against a wall as he asks none-too-tactful loaded questions ("Are you glad the Jews have gone?"). He pounces upon a peasant who remarks that the Jews stank, then beats a disappointed retreat when it emerges that this is less copybook anti-Semitism than a statement of occupational fact: the Jews in question "stank" because they happened to be tanners.

The repetition of certain questions leads one to suspect Lanzmann of seeking to discredit certain answers he dislikes. The clearest example is his reaction to the statement that the Western Jews arrived in first-class carriages, playing cards. Rather than citing this as an isolated, grotesque example of the terrible deceptiveness of events, he reverts to it (apparently disbelievingly) on several occasions, refusing to believe that any Jew could have been sent to his death in anything other than a crowded cattle-truck. Another instance occurs during the interview he filmed by hidden camera (how professionally ethical is this, I wonder?) with an ex-*SS Unterscharführer* who now lives in West Berlin. The *SS*-man remarks that at one point the Jews refused to disinter the bodies of their countrymen, although ordered to do so; the *SS* camp commandant, Wirth, had to give the lead. Surely, Lanzmann asks, the *SS* rather than the Jews held the whip hand—implying that the *SS* could have forced the Jews to do *anything*. Lanzmann's comment is subtly if inadvertently derogatory, since it implies that the Jews were incapable of any kind of resistance. But its primary purpose is to discredit the complexity of the event. Why does Lanzmann doubt that Wirth's corps could have done this? Was there any shortage of callous *SS*-men who prided themselves on their lack of squeamishness?

Lanzmann's condescension towards the Polish peasants (*some* of whom are certainly very alarming specimens) is also apparent in his interviews with some Poles who now inhabit once-Jewish houses. In inter-War Poland, it was predominantly the Jews who lived in the finely-decorated buildings that fronted on the street, while the Poles lived in the courtyards, or away from the town centre. Lanzmann comments on the beauty of these houses (they're beautiful *because* they were Jewish), and implies that the peasants who now inhabit them were glad to profit by the Jews' misfortune. He slouches (again!) patronisingly against the wall as the interpreter relays his French questions and the Polish answers. The mere fact that these Poles live in expropriated Jewish homes is altogether enough to indict them, he implies. To indict *them*; not the National Socialists, not history, but the people whose current residence there allows Lanzmann to cast them as scapegoats. What does he think the Poles ought to have done? left the houses untenanted? turned them all into museums? In a country as systematically devastated as Poland found itself after the War, any living-quarters were at a premium.

ALTHOUGH *Shoah* is impressive at points, for me the moments that energised the nine-and-a-half-hour epic were few and far between. Part One ends very effectively: a lorry is tracked around the *Ruhrgebiet* as Lanzmann's own voice reads an inhuman Nazi protocol from 1942 which suggests various "improvements" to the lorries bearing "the load" to Treblinka. "The load" tends to press to the back of the truck when the door closes, since "the load" fears the inside darkness. Because of this natural redistribution of weight within the lorry, one need have no fear of overburdening the front axle.

The trucks in question were ordered from a firm called Saurer. Hence Part One closes chillingly with a close-up of the lorry it has been following, revealing a Saurer trade-mark that indicates—metonymically—the persistence of the bases for anti-Semitic persecution through the continued existence of this firm.

There are other impressive moments. The whole section in Corfu—with its radiant light—provides relief from the mannered repetition of tracking shots through birch and pine woods. The account of conditions in the Warsaw Ghetto given by Jan Karski, a Polish underground emissary to the Polish government in exile in London during World War II, is

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truly uncanny: his mouth twitches nervously; he appears to be a man still inhabiting the inferno of the besieged Ghetto. The barrel-organ drone of his narrative renders it almost the prolonged, tortured notation of a fit of madness. One is embarrassed to watch and listen. (Was Lanzmann, I wonder?)

Rudolf Vrba's account of his work with the Theresienstadt camp resistance is admirable, wise, and measured, the sanest voice in the film. But Lanzmann's most powerful moment comes during the final interview session with Filip Muller, who as a member of the Auschwitz *Sonderkommando* was compelled to assist in the despatch of his Czech countrymen and women. He saw the women and children of Theresienstadt being herded brutally into the gas chambers (where they sang the Czech national anthem), and was convulsed by a sense of the meaninglessness of his life. As he breaks down, one weeps with and for him. He wanted to join the women in the gas chambers, he says; but they told him to stay behind, to bear witness to their fate.

Most such moments occur during the second part of *Shoah*, after it has shifted from hostile finger-pointing to the creation of a martyrology of the Jewish Resistance. In the final quarter of the film, Lanzmann assembles a series of exemplary Jewish figures for interview; and he contrasts them with the ineffectual German second-in-command of the administration of the Warsaw Ghetto, whose double-talk and embarrassment are so patent as almost to render him a pathetic figure. This man is the only old Nazi in the film who has agreed to an on-camera interview with Lanzmann (no need for hidden cameras here, or for close-ups of Lanzmann's technicians adjusting the aerial above the van parked in a street below). He is clearly the least intelligent of the Nazis Lanzmann interviews; how else could he have failed to foresee his embarrassment? He feigns ignorance and blusters ineffectually, reaching for a pencil to note down the date on which the deportations from the Ghetto began (as if it mattered to him, or as if he didn't already know) simply in order to have an excuse to glance away from the camera. He is "a mountaineer", it emerges; a pathetic instance of the linkage of "mountain ideology" and Nazism established by the historian S. Kracauer. The interview is a black comedy. It is almost too easy for Lanzmann—by no means a subtle interviewer—to involve the man in self-contradiction.

The dominant positive presence in the film, however, is that of Simon Srebnik, with whom the film begins. During the War, as a thirteen-year-old boy, he walked the streets of the village of Grabów in chains, sang Polish songs to the Germans, and was taught Prussian military songs in exchange. The film begins with him travelling in a barge along the river, as once he did in the War: it is the River Lethe, which he re-crosses to find access to his past. Srebnik sings his old songs for us now, smiling enigmatically—not really there—as he stands amid a group of Polish peasants chattering away on the church steps about the days when the Nazis assembled the Jews in the church before deporting them to Treblinka.

THE IMAGES IN Lanzmann's film are images of the present. Years later, he is examining what remains of the War—in physical actuality, in painful anecdote, in scarred memories. The asceticism of his method is admirable; he eschews use of the shocking icons that are to be found in film archives of the camps. And yet for all that the method is somehow sterile: it leaves the eye untouched; the repeated shots of Treblinka become monotonous. What matters is what happened there once, and *that* is recorded on the soundtrack from which the present images serve merely to distract us. Perhaps a more thoroughgoing asceticism would have been in order; perhaps the work should simply have been a compilation of voices, for radio, and not a film at all. These voices could have been accompanied by still photographs (in the manner of Chris Marker's *La Jetée*), drawing upon the pathos of the photograph—its absence and simultaneous presence. Then Lanzmann himself—the often unfeeling interviewer—and the endless ("remorseless"?) shots of trains clanking past could have been excised.

Shoah is a film whose few extraordinary moments are all but buried in the obsessive minutiae of Treblinka train-schedules. This is doubtless useful knowledge for someone, somewhere. But the monotony of its dissemination dulls our awareness of the fearsome reality it reflects.

Coming Out

There is a door. Believe me. Open it.
You are inside of your own volition.
Can you see light under the lintel?
Run your hand along the door jamb.
What makes you think you are locked in?
You have no reason. I am trying to help you.

If you shut your eyes you may feel better.
There must be a handle of some sort.
Now when your fingers fumble
over the latch, sneck, knob, spindle
see if it turns. Perhaps if you pull
sharply you'll find it gives.
Try moving to the right. There is
almost certainly a special trick
you have to learn. Manipulate,
juggle, shift. Do not lose your head.
Trust me. When the door opens
you will see the assembled faces.

And by their expression you can imagine
what you have become.

Dorothy Nimmo

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Russia & Islam

The Alma-Ata Riots

By S. Enders Wimbush

THE RECENT nationalist riots in the Soviet city of Alma-Ata in Kazakhstan are a serious portent for Mikhail Gorbachov and other Soviet leaders who envisage unimpeded Russian rule in the Soviet empire into the indefinite future. They are also a reminder to outside analysts, many of whom have accepted Soviet "social engineering" among the empire's non-Russian subjects for more than it is or ever can be. Minority nationalism remains a potent threat to the empire's long-term survival and short-term stability.

We only infrequently receive direct evidence of nationalist unrest inside the USSR. This does not mean, of course, that nationalist feelings do not exist or that ethnic resentment of the dominant Russians and the system they seek to impose on a variety of rich and ancient non-Russian cultures has disappeared. It means that the Russians have succeeded in controlling nationalist feelings and resentment in many parts of the Soviet state through the use of elaborate police, military, and intelligence apparatus. The Russian operatic soprano Galina Vishnevskaya, now in emigration, recently recounted to George Urban (ENCOUNTER, December 1986 and January 1987) how she had to wait more than ten years and travel to England to learn about the serious Russian riots in Novocherkassk in 1962, despite living in Moscow at the time and socialising actively among the USSR's political and cultural élite.

This tells us much about the ability of Russian control mechanisms to slow down or arrest the spread of information which the Kremlin wishes to keep out of the public domain. A similar movement of information from the empire's non-Russian periphery often faces the added disadvantage of language barriers, distance—and lack of interest on the part of both the Moscow intelligentsia (who are often the channel for other kinds of dissidence) and public opinion beyond Soviet borders. Still, evidence of continuing discontent among the empire's many minority nationalities does emerge.

Were the riots predictable? We are unlikely to be able to predict the timing of ethnic unrest in the USSR or to understand fully the constellation of forces that set it off, as the Alma-Ata riots demonstrate. But precisely because one can seldom gauge unseen nationalist feelings with precision, we should beware of analyses which purport to show that the Soviets have "successfully integrated" the diverse nationalities of the empire into a cohesive working unit, or that the Soviet régime has little to fear from nationalism. Soviet sources themselves constantly remind us that "the nationality problem" in the USSR has not been solved, that the leadership is ever vigilant lest nationalism again fragment the empire—as it did in 1917-18 and threatened to do during World War II. A recent Soviet analysis following the Alma-Ata riots admitted, "If there is one lesson to be drawn from the events in Alma-Ata, it is that while some problems in ethnic relations are solved others may emerge. . . ." This is hardly news—and hardly *glasnost* either. The American strategist Albert Wohlstetter certainly comes closer to the mark when he describes the USSR and its satellites as having "the brittle stability of an explosive mixture in a strong container capped under high pressure".[1]

IT IS TEMPTING TO CONCLUDE that the Soviet régime's apparent candour in reporting the riots is further evidence of Mr Gorbachov's vaunted *glasnost* campaign—and this is clearly how the Soviets wish their reporting to be viewed. But such a conclusion is undermined by the presence in Alma-Ata of hundreds of foreigners (especially students, and possibly a few delegations and correspondents), who would rapidly have exported the story in any case, putting their own interpretations on the tumultuous events. Soviet reporting of the riots at the time of their outbreak and after is, rather, an effort in structuring unstoppable news to the Soviets' best advantage. (Even so, Soviet officialdom found the outstanding reporting of the Alma-Ata incidents by *The Guardian*'s Martin Walker, who interviewed eyewitnesses just after the riots, distinctly unpalatable; in early January *Izvestia* devoted a lengthy article to attacking both the man—"he cooked up his report" —and, uncharacteristically, his newspaper.)

Even in diversity the Soviet press managed to cast the events as the result of Kazakh immorality rather than the predictable result of Soviet imperial rule. One finds in the Soviet accounts frequent accusations that the dissident Kazakhs were high on drugs, and that the whole affair was typical of

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[1] Albert Wohlstetter, Foreword to S. Enders Wimbush (ed.), *Soviet Nationalities in Strategic Perspective*. Croom Helm (London) and St Martin's Press (New York), 1985.

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the kind of criminal behaviour they had come to expect from the local Muslim mafias. (Typical of "Asians", in other words.) Soviet propagandists had been popularising both themes for some time before the riots. Drug use—subtly implied to be endemic to Central Asian society—has been attacked in the context of the increasing dependence and addiction of Soviet soldiers in Afghanistan and on their return home. Central Asia's ruling chieftains have been equated in thinly-disguised racial overtones with the "mafia dons" who saw their corrupt rule threatened by the crusading Mr Gorbachov.

The threatened leaders, the Soviet press has been pointing out, had urged their followers—"idle and arrogant local tyrants" (according to the new Kazakhstan Party chief, Gennadi Kolbin)—into Alma-Ata's streets to disrupt the positive changes that Moscow desired. Students were forced to join the protests because so many owed their places in institutes and universities to the corrupt wheeling-and-dealing of Kunaev's men. And so forth. By fixing on these as specific causes of the Alma-Ata disturbances, the régime obviously hopes to salvage an ounce of justification for Mr Gorbachov's frontal assaults on the Soviet Muslim peoples, whom he neither understands nor trusts—and conceivably does not like.

The Alma-Ata riots of December 1986 were not the first. Private sources report that in the spring of 1980 Kazakhs rioted when Soviet officials quietly attempted to bury Kazakh soldiers, who had been killed in Afghanistan, in Soviet military, rather than Muslim, cemeteries. The war in Afghanistan has prompted a number of serious minority protests throughout the USSR, from the Baltic states and Transcaucasia to Central Asia. The protests include several mutinies by Soviet Muslim soldiers inside Afghanistan in 1981 and 1985, and at least one other—by Muslim North Caucasians—in Astrakhan in 1985.

HOWEVER, THE ALMA-ATA RIOTS are distinctly more threatening to Russian control of this strategic borderland. While estimates of the number of rioters vary greatly—from 10,000 to several hundred thousand—they are significant by any standard; and in the Soviet context they are truly extraordinary. The disturbances lasted for nearly 48 hours and were only quelled by upwards of 50,000 outside security troops. The number of deaths has been put unofficially at nearly 40—the Soviet media have now owned-up to three dead, although eyewitnesses confirm many more. Casualties ran to several hundred, including policemen, militia, and Communist Party officials. One *Novosti* report referred to the riots as "a pogrom", leaving no doubt as to their anti-Russian nature. Virtually every stratum of Kazakh society was represented, from professionals to farmers.

The riots were planned and well coordinated. Kunaev's dismissal had been rumoured for weeks; when it was announced, the streets came alive. Soviet reporting acknowledges that the

News from Alma-Ata

Moscow

STUDENT RIOTS **in Alma-Ata, capital of Kazakhstan in Central Asia, were not prompted by a spontaneous outburst of nationalist sentiment, but were a provocative attempt to pit Kazakhs against other inhabitants of the republic, most of whom are Russians, "Literaturnaya Gazeta" said. The weekly newspaper said tranquillity has set in in the republic, which shares a border with China, following a two-day rampage on December 17-18 by students and other Kazakhs the day after a Russian with a reputation as a hard-liner was appointed to replace the long-time Kazakh leader of the free-wheeling republic.**

"At present, several days after the unrest, one is becoming increasingly aware that a provocative attempt was made to bring about estrangement between people, between nations. Some people, using lies, threats and persuasion, tried to take our inexperienced and politically illiterate youngsters into the streets and squares."

They were joined by "hooligans, alcoholics and anti-social elements" who, armed with "metal rods, canes and stones, beat and insulted the people, overturned and set fire to cars, broke windows in shops, hostels and other public buildings. . . ." No information on casualties has been released.

"We shall find out who told lies to our children, who took them out of their student hostels and put into their hands hostile, illiterate slogans. They themselves were hiding somewhere."

The riots broke out the day after the Central Committee of the Kazakh Communist Party ousted Dinmukhamed Kunayev, whose two-decade reign recently has been criticised as corrupt and inefficient, and replaced him with Russian Gennady Kolbin. The *Tass* news agency account said the students, who were joined by hooligans and parasites, were incited by nationalist fervour. The article in "Literaturnaya Gazeta" was the first to say the riots were organised, although new decrees in the Republic have hinted that they were, and that a cover-up was protecting the instigators.

Soviets arriving in Moscow from Alma-Ata have told Western news organisations people passed out vodka and a mild form of marijuana to the students, in what appeared to be officially-sanctioned rioting.

"Time will come and we shall know who organised the developments in Alma-Ata. The truth and only the truth is needed now as never before. The Kazakh people should know by sight and by name those who on the sly were busy sowing the seeds of distrust between Kazakh and other peoples inhabiting the republic."

Only about 36% of the residents are Kazakh; the remainder is comprised of people from other republics, mostly Russian. Western diplomats have said the rioting took place against a growing resentment toward Russians and Soviet policies under leader Mikhail Gorbachov, who has cracked down on "corruption and inefficiency".

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leadership of the riots was well organised. Kazakhstan's Russian-language newspaper eventually (10 January) admitted as much: the riots "were not spontaneous". Critics have been quick to blame the educational system (teachers at high schools, institutes and universities have for years been accused of espousing anti-Russian positions), and Russian reporting seeks to paint a picture of ungrateful subjects abusing facilities that Russians have established at great expense. A more accurate portrait probably is of local activists turning "the system" imposed upon them to their own advantage.

The apparent cause of the riots—the dismissal of the Kazakhstan Communist Party First Secretary Kunaev, himself a Kazakh, and his replacement by a Russian crony of Mikhail Gorbachov—is both revealing and suggestive, for it discloses the substantial groundswell of anti-Russian feeling which lies just below the surface. In fact, Gorbachov has carried Moscow's struggle in Central Asia much farther than either Konstantin Chernenko or Yuri Andropov, his immediate predecessors; but the latter at least clearly had Central Asia in his sights. Andropov fired the first salvos in the war on Central Asian corruption, and took early action to reorganise cadre appointments in Central Asia so that they were more in keeping with his view of security requirements. His principal agents for bringing Central Asia to heel were now the deputy Party head, Viktor Ligachev, and a rising star of Andropov's own choosing, Mikhail Gorbachov. To enforce his policies, Gorbachov's contributions since becoming First Secretary include the dispatch of hundreds of Russian "experts" to Central Asia—the programme is called the "inter-regional exchange of cadres". He has also overseen the replacement of a number of prominent native leaders (in Tashkent and Ashkhabad, for example) by ethnic Russians.

Scenes of a Riot

According to unofficial reports reaching here from the provincial capital, Alma-Ata, at least 7 policemen and 13 demonstrators were killed in the riots. The demonstrators, said to number more than 10,000, marched on the Communist Party headquarters on Wednesday night, broke into the building at three points, and ransacked some offices. The official Soviet media have said that the disturbances were violent but reported no deaths.

According to reports reaching Western correspondents, 70,000 troops have been rushed to the area, none of them from local Kazakh regiments. Troops with armoured cars occupied the university where the trouble began on Friday night, and 15 planes left the Soviet capital for Alma-Ata last week, carrying a host of Party investigators and administrative staff who will take over the running of the local Kazakh Party.

ANTI-RUSSIAN **sentiments among the predominantly Kazakh students began the demonstrations. The inability, or perhaps the reluctance of local Kazakh Party officials to cool the situation allowed it to escalate into widespread anti-Russian riots.**

According to usually reliable Muscovites with relatives in Alma-Ata, the rioters were able to break into two prisons and free the inmates. Russians in the street were attacked on sight, stabbed and clubbed. The riots seem to have been made worse by local food shortages. TASS reported that one food store was burned down, but many others are said to have been looted. More than 200 people are reportedly seriously ill in hospitals in Alma-Ata after the riots which swept the city in the week before Christmas, and two of the temporary prison camps, used to accommodate drunks, have been cleared to make room for over 1,000 arrested rioters.

A RELIABLE PICTURE *is now emerging of the nationalist riots in the capital of Kazakhstan, which followed the replacement of the old Kazakh Party chief, Mr Dinmukhamed Kunayev, with a Russian, Mr Gennady Kolbin.*

The banners carried by the demonstrators included the slogans: **"AUTONOMY—AND SEPARATE SEAT FOR KAZAKHSTAN AT THE UNITED NATIONS", "WE WANT TO JOIN CHINA", "AMERICA IS WITH US, THE RUSSIANS AGAINST US",** *and* **"KOLBIN GO BACK TO RUSSIA".**

The violence became so widespread that Russians in the city were told over the radio to stay off the streets on the second day of the riots. The situation was so confused that in some of the education institutes around which the barricades were erected, students and teachers behind the barricades were not sure whether they had been built against the rioters or against the riot troops.

> **"We were all just very frightened [one young Uzbek, a student of the Railway Institute, said]. We could read the slogans on the banners and some students with me were shouting nationalist slogans, while the rest of us were just hoping for the police to restore order. We did not dare leave the Institute."**

A Russian woman, who came to Moscow from Alma-Ata to visit her family for the New Year, said:

> **"The Kazakhs were coming in from the countryside, commandeering buses. Some bus-drivers were killed if they tried to keep the mobs out of their buses. The rioters had building materials from the big construction on Brezhnev Square, and one bus-driver was bludgeoned to death with scaffolding poles."**

The events were complicated by Kazakh-Russian hostility, and Kazakh tribalism. The dominant tribal group among the Kazakhs are the Djuzi, or the "Southern Mafia", from which Dinmukhamed Kunayev and the bulk of his protégés who hitherto dominated the Kazakh Communist Party, all come.

> **"When the Kazakhs came in from the countryside, they brought vodka and drugs [said the Russian woman]. They were giving out small buns with hashish inside them. It seemed very well organised. . . ."**

ON THE FIRST DAY, *and apparently with the connivance of some city authorities, the police did not use force. They simply tried to persuade people to disperse. On the evening of the first day, military cadets were quickly brought in lorries on Brezhnev Square, near the University, to try to break up the crowds of students and bus-loads of rural Kazakhs who were gathering there.*

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Replacement of the native-born Kazakh Dinmuhammed Kunaev by the Russian Gennadi Kolbin is not so much a new policy as a giant step in a direction determined somewhat earlier.

ONLY THE MOST NAIVE OPTIMIST would conclude that Kunaev's replacement by a Russian was the sole cause of the disturbances: they clearly result from much deeper and long-standing hostility. Its roots are traceable to the Russian massacre of Kazakhs in 1916, when Central Asian Muslims rioted after being subjected to conscription in the Czar's imperial service. On Stalin's orders, in the 1930s, Moscow compounded this atrocity by forcibly settling the nomadic Kazakhs; it cost the Kazakhs one-third of their total population—one million lives. Successive Soviet régimes have steadily inundated Kazakhstan with Russian immigrants, especially in the 1950s and 1960s; now the local Kazakhs form a minority within their own republic. Throughout their entire experience under Soviet rule, they have been subjected to heavy anti-Islamic attacks. The Kazakhs adopted Islam relatively late (it penetrated the region in the 9th century but gained real momentum in the 19th century, much later than in the Arab lands), but they adhere to it with a special tenacity.

Unless we surmise that Gorbachov intended gratuitous offence to the Kazakh people in breaking one of the seldom-violated principles of cadre policy—a member of the nominal nationality of a Republic usually becomes First Secretary, even if real power is held by a Russian Second Secretary or the *KGB* representative—then we must conclude that he blundered. In this respect his operating style in Central Asia stands in stark contrast to that of his predecessor, Leonid Brezhnev. Before becoming First Secretary, Brezhnev had had extensive experience in the non-Russian regions of the empire, including Kazakhstan. As First Secretary he was prepared to tolerate corruption, nepotism—and even a modicum of nationalism and Islam in the Central Asian borderland—so long as Moscow's rule remained unchallenged. Gorbachov comes from Stavropol (a region of the southern Russian republic which might be likened to some of the more rough-and-tumble parts of Texas), and has little experience in the non-Russian regions. Moreover, he appears to have little previous interest in "the nationality question" as such. Where Brezhnev's approach to the minorities was comparatively subtle and selective, Gorbachov's approach, as in so much else, has been open confrontation—"kick butts and take names". He shows little understanding of the potency of national symbols (except perhaps Russian nationalist symbols) or of the vulnerability of multinational empires which fail to manipulate them successfully.

CAN MORE "GLASNOST" help Gorbachov remedy his problems in Central Asia or in other non-Russian regions? A number of commentators have suggested this, but in my view *glasnost* is an unlikely palliative for the grievances of the USSR's numerous national minorities. Given a fair chance, many are certain to describe the Russians' relations with their minorities openly, in terms which the Kremlin cannot tolerate—for example as "Great Power domination . . . colonialism . . . imperialism . . . racism", and so forth. Ivan Dzyuba, a famous Ukrainian underground dissident of the 1960s, in his path-breaking study *Internationalisation or Russification* (1968) called on Moscow for more candour and more openness—he actually used the word *glasnost*—in dealing with nationality issues. Dzyuba suffered extensive persecution for his candour, and was eventually forced into public recantation. It is unlikely that Gorbachov will tolerate anything approaching Dzyuba's reasoned complaints—and he has already gone on record in Moscow, at the January 1987 Party Plenum, against "flirting with nationalism". Gorbachov can perhaps afford a bit of *glasnost* in central Russia to get *his* nation moving, but he can scarcely afford to prescribe "openness" as a tonic for strained ethnic relations. That would get

"They did not have any ammunition, or if they did, they did not use it [said a young Uzbek]. They were attacked by the mob. . . . Many of the cadets fell, and then the mob attacked them with wooden poles which had nails stuck in their ends. It was like a massacre."

The Russian woman said she had heard from several people that rioters had attacked at least one kindergarten, and that Russian children had been killed.

With 70,000 troops now posted in and around the city, some of them paratroops who were brought in on the second day from their bases on the Afghan border, the city is now calm, although still shaken.

Martin Walker
in THE GUARDIAN (*London*)

THE GUARDIAN *was attacked in the official Soviet Government newspaper, "Izvestia", yesterday for spreading "disinformation and sowing poisonous seeds of slander" in its reports of the riots in Kazakhstan just before Christmas: "The 'Guardian' correspondent, Martin Walker, cooked up his report on the events in Alma-Ata" and, taking on a life of its own, it travelled around the world spreading tales of "clashes" and "victims" and "thousands of arrests", "Izvestia" said in a commentary.*

The attack was matched in yesterday's "Pravda" by an attack on "The Times", headlined "HARD TIMES FOR ANTI-SOVIETEERS".

The attacks in "Izvestia" and in "Pravda" cited the new "glasnost" policy as a cause of panic among

". . . those who used to earn their living by telling tales about the Soviet Union, these inventors of hullabaloos about our country who are now seized by worry at the prospect of being left without work now that we talk openly about everything. . . . The process of national reconstruction goes on very slowly in Kazakhstan, and meets complex, intricate opposition. It is time to speak out openly about the protection rackets and tribal mafias. The more openness, the sooner they will disappear."

But openness about the riots in Kazakhstan has been in remarkably short supply in the Soviet press.

THE GUARDIAN (*London*)

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other nations moving with the logic of emotions, in directions that are inimical to Russian interests.

From Alma-Ata Gorbachov has heard the death-knell of a special Leninist-Stalinist fantasy in the official Soviet liturgy. Many, if not most, of the rioters are the intended "New Soviet Men" of Soviet propaganda, despite Moscow's hurried attempts to label them as "parasites" and "anti-social elements". Kazakh youth have dealt a severe blow to the preferred version of Soviet reality of many Western political scientists and economists, who insist that Soviet political and economic progress has given birth to a new generation of "upwardly mobile non-Russians", who have an inviolable stake in the system and can therefore be counted on to defend it. Before Alma-Ata, many rioters would have been described by these academics as "coopted" by the system. We now know beyond doubt that a large number of young people and professionals with good prospects and positions were prepared to sacrifice them in order to "remain Kazakh above all else". At worst, those arrested will be imprisoned (as many have already been) or even shot; at best, they will lose their jobs, privileges, and educational opportunities: in short, every passport to what in the Soviet context is a successful career.

It is impossible not to conclude from this that at some point (and the Alma-Ata riots appear to be just such a moment) the magnetic attraction of economic betterment, which the Soviets constantly thrust forward as justification for Moscow's rule, becomes meaningless. The late Hugh Seton-Watson, arguably the pre-eminent authority on empires of recent times, would see nothing surprising in this. Empires become most vulnerable, as Seton-Watson argued, when economic and educational standards rise among the subject people, and expectations of all kinds can no longer be contained.

The Soviet version of their own reality also requires some revision. In Central Asia, as elsewhere in the empire, the Soviets argue—and they are echoed by many political scientists in the West—if any segment of the population cannot easily accommodate to Soviet ways it is the older generation, whether it is a matter of their views on religion, on nationalism, on language, or on ideology. The Soviets, therefore, direct the lion's share of their massive propaganda for "sovietisation" at native young people. After all, the Soviet leaders believe, the old folks will eventually die off; the generations will change for the better. Indoctrinated "Soviet" youth, cleansed of their parents' backward ways and ideas, will step into their shoes; and Soviet society will march smartly into the future. Many Western observers, while not necessarily sharing the Soviets' sense of the desirability of such an evolution (although some do), quietly accept that over the long run no mortal can withstand the awesome onslaught of cradle-to-grave propaganda.

But Alma-Ata illustrates a very different trend. Kazakh youth have accommodated even less to the Soviet system than their elders. In the face of massive Soviet efforts over many decades to convince the rioters' grandparents and parents of the wisdom of sublimating national feelings to an overarching "Soviet patriotism" and "brotherly internationalism", their children today by choice remain more Kazakh than "Soviet", and are aggressively more anti-Russian.

Soviet authorities have just begun to admit, for example, that young Central Asians speak Russian more poorly than the generation preceding them; that it is becoming more difficult to integrate them into the armed forces; and that the resurgence of Islam is powered increasingly by younger Central Asians and intellectuals. The Soviet Prime Minister, Nikolai Ryzhkov, asked to comment on events in Alma-Ata while on a recent trip to Helsinki, gave a revealing preview of the new Gorbachov line on this particular dilemma. The youth of Alma-Ata just don't understand the real issues, Ryzhkov argued. "We will teach them and convince them, and those who do not understand will just have to stand aside and not get in the way . . .", he warned. The young Kazakhs are clearly intended to understand that they may soon find standing-room-only in the prisons and labour camps of their native land.

Dissident youth is a threat against which multinational empires have few defences. That the trend is becoming evident in other parts of the Soviet empire—in the North Caucasus, the Ukraine, and the Baltic states, for example—must cause the Soviet leadership real concern. In the Soviet Muslim regions the threat is particularly acute because of high birth rates. Gorbachov has already shown his hand in this respect. He has just proposed a strict population-control policy in Muslim Tajikistan, where the birth rate is among the highest in the USSR and where young people have been deeply influenced by the war in Afghanistan. Like other Gorbachovian policies in Central Asia, this one goes for the jugular. Young Tajiks may yet have something to say on this score.

The riots underline the fact that young Kazakhs, like other Soviet Muslims, have begun to think actively about alternative models for their own development. From foreign broadcasts they know a good deal about what has transpired in Iran and in the Islamic revolution generally. Many continue to look to Turkey as an attractive alternative to Russian rule. Soviet Muslims have had first-hand exposure to the Soviet war on Muslim Afghanistan. This conflict, which the Russians have failed to win and which they would dearly love to resolve without losing face, tells Soviet Muslims that successful resistance to Russian domination is possible, and a future without Russians is thinkable.

ENTER CHINA. Several Western accounts of the Alma-Ata riots noted that some of the demonstrators were carrying signs which read; "We want to join China" (or words to that effect): post-Alma-Ata Soviet reports referred to "obnoxious banners". The implication cannot be lost on the Soviet leaders; if these sentiments are harboured by many Kazakhs, they represent an important reversal of an important strategic position.

China has a large Kazakh population of its own, which it has historically oppressed. Over the last 50 years there have been many Kazakh migrations from China to the Soviet empire, where conditions for Kazakhs were thought to be better. In the early 1980s, however, China undertook important and far-reaching changes in its nationality and religious

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policies, with a view to lessening its nagging borderland vulnerability. The Chinese still have some distance with more "policy changes" to go before the Kazakhs of the People's Republic of China are fully content. But if the "obnoxious banners" of the Alma-Ata demonstrators derive from serious political thinking, China has already moved far enough to reverse the poles of attraction across this strategic border. Gorbachov's dilemma in Alma-Ata thus goes well beyond the problem of containing a few thousand chanting students.

KAZAKH NATIONALISM is in many ways different from other nationalisms among Soviet Muslims. It has always been strongly secular in character. We simply cannot know at this stage whether the common bond of Islam among the Kazakhs or the Islamic stimuli from Iran and Afghanistan, which Soviet officials have acknowledged for some time, played an important role in determining the direction or severity of the riots. We do know that the Soviet leadership has recently expressed through the press an increasing apprehension about "the politicisation of Islam" in Central Asia, most especially in the republics bordering Afghanistan and Iran, but also in Kazakhstan, and it would be naive to believe that the evolution of Islamic politics in these borderland countries has had no discernible psychological impact on Soviet Muslims.

Recent analyses by Soviet specialists have spoken of the growth in Muslim borderlands of "Muslim nationalism", and "pan-Islamic tendencies". They attribute Islamic activism in the USSR to "Muslims who are not practising believers" and to "religious ideologists" who would use Islam as a political instrument. Islamic *samizdat* networks have sprung up, and provocative Islamic materials from Afghanistan and Peshawar are finding channels into Soviet Central Asia. Until recently, the Soviet practice has been to insist that Islam is the refuge of elderly eccentrics, confidence tricksters, and the mentally unbalanced. All this has changed, and Islam in the Soviet empire has clearly become a major worry for the Kremlin.

Will the Kazakh example spread to other parts of Central Asia? The Soviet leaders are rightly concerned. They know that spillover is likely, and that in transit the Alma-Ata riots could acquire a more pronounced Islamic colouring. The distance between Kazakh nationalism and "Muslim nationalism" is short indeed, and could be easily bridged. The spectre of rampaging youth must cause the Soviet leadership considerable anxiety, for—as they must now be painfully aware—the Islamic upheavals which have convulsed the societies on their southern flank and the "fundamentalist" opposition to the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan were largely phenomena of youth.

GORBACHOV has signalled that he is aware of this possibility, and has come out firmly against "openness" in dealing with Islam. For example, his cadre are responsible for orchestrating the current vehement anti-Islamic campaign in the borderlands, the most strident campaign of its kind in the USSR since the Khrushchev days—and perhaps of all time. Gorbachov himself, as recently as late November, complained in Tashkent about the rising spectre of unchecked religious adherence, even among the Party faithful, and demanded tough measures to deal with it. "There must be no divergence between [the Party's] words and deeds on this issue", he is reported to have said. By his words and deeds, and those of his hand-picked cadre, we are left in no doubt about his totally hostile position on Islam. We shall find no evidence here to support the "liberal pragmatist" image which is so appealing to Western journalists: Gorbachov reveals himself as exceedingly doctrinaire, a true Leninist.

And probably a Russian nationalist too. Gorbachov's well-publicised slip-of-the-tongue in Kiev, when he publicly gave credit for general Soviet progress to the *Russian* people rather than the *Soviet* peoples—and then reversed himself in some embarrassment—may well indicate where the Russian leader's real sympathies lie.

IN THE aftermath of the Alma-Ata riots, Russian nationalism has been allowed to rear its head in occasionally primitive ways. The Soviet media took the Kazakhs to task for the "nationalist" character of their literature, and insisted that the riots could be traced to the system's failure to educate young Kazakhs better in the Russian language. One indignant reader wrote to *Izvestia* to complain about the uppity Kazakhs, and to claim special status for Russians in all Union republics. Russian nationalism is a force Gorbachov holds in reserve, and it would be totally in keeping with his blunt, aggressive style to unleash it selectively to counterbalance militance among the empire's non-Russians. A species of racial disdain for Soviet Muslims runs deep in Russian society, as does the fear of unchecked Islam. Whatever else they are seen to be, Russians will see the Alma-Ata riots as

Party's Over?

AS DINMUKHAMED *Kunayev, Party leader of Kazakhstan, looks like being the first ex-Politburo member in 30 years to face trial for corruption, "Izvestia" has revealed more details on just how much State-owned property the élite in the Republic was monopolising for its exclusive use. It reads like a shopping list:*

247 hotels, 414 guest flats, 84 cottages, 22 hunting lodges, 350 hospital beds, polyclinic places for 500, children's health clinic places for 160, adult clinic places for 285, 2,000 places for children at pioneer camps, rooms in new hostels for 1,500 adults, and new flats for 365 war veteran and invalid families.

These will now "revert to the use of Kazakh people", who have already seen the benefit of the ending of another Party fiddle: 30% of all food supplies and over two-thirds of new flats in the capital were being creamed off by Party officials.

LONDON EVENING STANDARD

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"Muslim riots", and Russian nationalism, perhaps with Gorbachov's backing, will thrive on the coincidence.

Even if Gorbachov cracks down hard and ruthlessly on the perpetrators of the Kazakh riots, as he has already begun to do, there is every likelihood that other Soviet minorities, non-Muslims as well as Muslims, will be raising their own demands in their own ways and their own time. Officials in neighbouring Kirghizia, citing the events in Alma-Ata as something to be avoided in their republic, have already begun to purge social-science faculties of those whose academic commitment to "internationalism" is weak. Some may openly demonstrate and even riot; others will find quieter ways to articulate their challenge. Gorbachov will now preside over a new and perhaps stormy era in Russian/minority relations, and its outlines are likely to be of his own making whether or not he plans it so.

Let me put it this way. He could find himself with the same problem as the German officer in an old wartime joke. Entering a train compartment where two Frenchmen are seated, the German inadvertently steps on a toe. The offended Frenchman leaps up and strikes the German in the face. Then the second Frenchman stands, and he too strikes the German. Questioned later in court as to why they had behaved like this, the first Frenchman explained that his toe had been badly hurt; his reaction was instinctive. "And you? Why did you strike the German officer?" "Well", replied the second Frenchman, "when I saw the German being hit for the first time, I assumed this was now permitted. . . ."

AUTHORS

Dan Pinck lives in Boston. He is currently writing a novel set in East Africa.

George Urban, until recently Director of Radio Free Europe, graduated from the University of Budapest in 1947 and in 1956 obtained his PhD at the University of London. He served with the BBC from 1948-60 and then as director of university broadcasting and academic consultant for RFE, on whose behalf this conversation was recorded. Among numerous other publications, he has edited *Détente* (1976), *Hazards of Learning* (1977), *Eurocommunism* (1978), *Communist Reformation* (1979) and *Stalinism: Its Impact on Russia and the World* (1982), all published by Maurice Temple Smith. Many of the extended conversations which appear in his books had their first publication in ENCOUNTER.

Raymond Tallis is a consultant in the Royal Liverpool Hospital. He has published numerous scientific articles on neurological rehabilitation and drug therapy in the elderly, and is editor of the forthcoming *Neurological Diseases of Old Age* (John Wiley). He has also published verse, short stories, and articles on literary theory—*Not Saussure*, his critique of post-Saussurean theory, is to be published this autumn by Macmillan.

Edward Pearce's two volumes of satirical sketches of Parliamentary personalities, *The Senate of Lilliput* and *Hummingbirds and Hyenas*, are published by Faber & Faber.

Jean-François Revel writes a regular column for *Le Point* in Paris. *How Democracies Perish*, his most recently translated work, was published in 1985 by Weidenfeld (London) and Doubleday (New York).

Roy Kerridge is the author of a novel, *Druid Madonna* (Brynmill, 1983); his non-fiction work about West Indians in England, *Real Wicked Guy*, was followed by *Bizarre Britain: A Calendar of Eccentricity* (Blackwell, 1983, 1985), and a volume of autobiography, *Lone Conformist*, was brought out in 1984 by Chatto & Windus. His latest book, *The People of Britain*, is published this summer by Robert Hale.

Arno Bohlmeijer took his MA in British and American Literature at the University of Nijmegen, and now teaches English at a grammar school in Zutphen. Among his translations into Dutch are works by D. H. Lawrence, E. M. Forster and Graham Greene. His first novel, *Op Het Punt van Breken* (*On The Point of Breaking*) will be published this autumn by Wildeboer (Haarlem).

Douglas Dunn's books of poetry have won the Somerset Maugham Award, the Geoffrey Faber Memorial Prize, the Hawthornden Prize, and the Whitbread Award. They include *Terry Street* (1969), *The Happier Life* (1972), *Love or Nothing* (1972), *Barbarians* (1979), *St Kilda's Parliament* (1981), *Elegies* (1985), and *Selected Poems 1964-83*, all published by Faber & Faber.

Eric Sams writes on music—his books include *The Songs of Hugo Wolf* and *The Songs of Robert Schumann* (2nd rev. eds., Eulenburg, 1983, 1975)—and on historical cipher and shorthand, as well as on Shakespeare. *Shakespeare's Lost Play: Edmund Ironside* was published in 1986 by Junction Books and Wildwood House; *Edward III* is in preparation.

Irving Kristol, Professor of Social Thought at the New York University Graduate School of Business Administration, is co-editor of *The Public Interest* (New York) and publisher of *The National Interest* (Washington, D.C.).

Max Beloff, Gladstone Professor of Government and Public Administration, University of Oxford, from 1957-74, and Principal of the University College at Buckingham, 1974-79, was created a life peer in 1981. His most recent books are *Wars and Welfare, Britain 1914-15* (Edward Arnold, 1984) and, as co-author, *The Government of the United Kingdom* (Weidenfeld, 1985).

Josef Joffe, born in 1944, grew up in Berlin and went to the USA for his higher education, receiving a PhD in Government from Harvard University. He has written widely on Germany, and on international relations and strategy (and is the author of a notable article, "The Cost of Abandoning Europe" published in the Spring 1986 number of the Washington quarterly journal *The National Interest*). He has just completed a book on European-American relations, *The Limited Partnership*, which will be published in the US by Ballinger.

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DISCUSSION

Of Lords, Sirs, & Plain Misters

An Exchange Between IRVING KRISTOL *&* MAX BELOFF

MY GOOD FRIEND Max Beloff (ENCOUNTER, April) is appalled at my suggestion that British holders of titles should abandon their use; except for ceremonial occasions when one's honours may appropriately be on display. The editors of ENCOUNTER or perhaps Mr Beloff himself, seem less than entirely convinced by his argument, since his polemic is signed simply "Max Beloff". Why? Is it because the readers of ENCOUNTER are assumed to be, in some important respect, his peers, while readers of *The Times*, say, are not?

The issue is not as trivial as it seems, since it involves the relation of the spirit of conservatism to the spirit of equality in a modern society. When he asserts that I am "as incapable as most Americans of being a conservative in any profound sense, and [am] simply a democrat like everyone else", Mr Beloff touches exactly the right nerve. That opposition of conservatism to democracy does indeed strike an American as very odd—even archaic. I would go on to say that it is the widespread sense of such an opposition which cripples British conservatism and prevents it from enrolling the majority of the British people in its ranks.

Mr Beloff thinks it inconsistent of me to accept an institution like the House of Lords—a non-elective upper chamber—while decrying the use of titles in reporting the activities of its members, in the House or out. He misconstrues the democratic idea. We Americans have a non-elected Supreme Court with powers far, far greater than those of the House of Lords. Only a handful of rabid majoritarians see anything undemocratic in this. The American people do not, since they understand that democratic self-government is a complex affair rather than a simple one, and that the will of the people ought properly to be "refined" before reaching an ultimate conclusion.

Among all peoples, including Americans, there is an instinctive and natural and healthy deference toward men and women of distinction. We will often, as a matter of courtesy, address certain people as "Senator" or "Judge" or "Ambassador" long after they have tottered off into senility. But this is a voluntary exercise in deference, and you need not observe it if you are not so inclined. In fact, our media are not so inclined, and drop the titles once the office is vacated. In Britain, of course, where peers are appointed for life, it is bound to be somewhat different. I am pleased that Max Beloff has been honoured with a peerage and see no reason why he should not have "MHL" after his name to the end of his days. It does not disturb my democratic ethos that he should have this advantage over a mere MP. On the other hand, I think "Lord Beloff" ought only to exist on ceremonial occasions. I leave those occasions undefined, since I don't much care about them.

BUT ALL THIS IS by the way. What is central is Mr Beloff's belief that Britain, unlike the United States, is not a democracy but a nice mixture of aristocracy and democracy, and that the traditional class system serves the important function of providing Britain with disinterested public servants who have an elevated conception of the common good. I am not so dogmatic a democrat—not many Americans are, actually—that I would take offence at such a state of affairs, if it existed. But it doesn't exist, except in the imagination of some British conservatives. It is a Tory idea that has very little congruence with the Conservative Party as it exists today.

The spirit of equality remains, as Tocqueville observed a century-and-a-half ago, the dominant spirit of the age, and in Britain today this spirit is soured by a set of very thin, but tenacious, aristocratic pretensions. Since this aristocratic heritage is an integral part of the British national tradition, the British people are understandably loath to disengage themselves entirely from it. At the same time, however, they feel entrapped in it. They feel that it forecloses opportunities and represses a spirit of equality that has as yet to find its full expression. Hence the ambivalence of the British people on the issue of class. Hence, too, their frustration, which makes British life and British society today so cheerless, so abounding in *ressentiment*.

NOTE THAT I am talking about *the spirit* of equality. In a healthy democracy, this spirit is forward-looking, optimistic, and speaks with a "fraternal" accent, not a paternalistic (or maternalistic) one. Yes, inequalities of income or wealth or social position are inevitable in a modern, democratic, commercial society; but they need not be a source of controversy. They are not in the United States, despite the heroic efforts of our egalitarians; and they are less

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so in France and Italy than in Britain. What is crucial is that such inequalities not be perceived as part of a "class structure" that stifles or inhibits individual initiative, individual ambition, individual merit. Social equality—the democratic ethos—is what makes these other inequalities tolerable in a modern democracy, for it is social equality that assures us that we are included in the society, no matter how disadvantaged we may be at any particular time. It is because of its full acceptance of social equality that the democratic United States is today the most conservative nation, with the most conservative population, in the Western World.

In Britain, alas, the reaction to my very modest proposal on titles suggests that many conservatives are more interested in exclusion than inclusion.

A Last Word

I AM a little surprised that Irving Kristol now makes it clear that his suggestion that titles should be dropped except on ceremonial occasions was a serious one. I had thought it to be a sort of joke. I note that he refers to me as Mr Beloff; that is quite incorrect, as incorrect as it would be for me to insist on calling him Lord Kristol. To make such an error inadvertently would not matter; to do so deliberately seems to be rather rude; but politeness does not rank high among democratic values. The fact that the editors of ENCOUNTER (and my book publishers) use "Max Beloff" has nothing to do with a concession to democratic prejudice. It is simply more convenient for all concerned that the name of an established writer should remain the same. For similar reasons, female authors or actresses with no touch of feminist nonsense about them may prefer to retain their maiden name in their professional life while using their married name in other contexts.

But these are trivial matters. They do however highlight, as Mr Kristol admits, a difference of opinion between us both as to democracy in general and as to its role in Britain in particular. My difficulty in dealing with the latter is that I find Mr Kristol's portrayal of Britain and of the British Conservative Party so remote from reality that I wonder where he has got it from—it cannot just be from disgruntled expatriates. Can it be that he sees Britain through the eyes of the writers of letters to *The Guardian*, who also reflect a country "so cheerless, so abounding in *ressentiment*"? If so, a Left-wing newspaper seems a curious source for a "conservative" to choose.

I have the advantage over Mr Kristol of having been able to observe these matters more directly, during the six years I have spent as a member of the legislature, and as an active participant in Conservative Party affairs at its headquarters and in the Parliamentary constituencies. I recognise that there are many disagreeable features of contemporary British society—for instance, the persistence of primary poverty at a time of rising living standards for the majority. But what also impresses me is the continued willingness of individuals throughout society to spend time and money through an enormous variety of voluntary bodies in trying to remedy the evils perceived. Personal frustration there must be where job prospects are poor and families seem locked in a cycle of deprivation; but that has nothing to do with the kind of impatience with the alleged inhibitions produced by the class structure to which Mr Kristol draws our attention.

A system that provides Britain with "disinterested public servants" through a "traditional class system" is not something that exists in "the imagination of some British conservatives" nor is it one not "congruent with the Conservative Party as it exists today". What weakens the Conservative

"Molespeak"

Oxford

WE ALL KNOW *about moles now and the labyrinthine methods they employ. One might call the deeply obscure linguistic codes and signs used by moles, sleepers, and other elements of the spying trade,* **"Molespeak".**

A few years ago I needed to investigate for the "Oxford English Dictionary" the origin of the word "mole" in the sense of "a secret intelligence agent who gradually achieves a position deep within the security defences of a country or organisation". John le Carré , to whom I turned for help, replied that as best his recollection served him he picked up the word "mole" from the glossary of technical terms appended to the Royal Commission Report on the Gouzenko case, which appeared soon after the War. He first used it himself in "Tinker, Tailor, Soldier, Spy", but it was not his own invention.

MEANWHILE **evidence of various kinds has accumulated. A book by a writer called Geoffrey Bailey, "The Conspirators" (1960), declares that in 1935 the Russians recruited a Captain Fedossenko as a double agent and gave him the alias "The Mole".**

Three centuries earlier Francis Bacon, in his "History of the Reign of Henry VII", used the word "mole" in something like the same way:

"Hee was carefull and liberall to obtaine good Intelligence from all parts abroad. . . . Hee had such Moles perpetually working and casting to undermine him."

And from Henry Vaughan's "The World":

"Yet dig'd the Mole, and lest his ways be found
Workt under ground,
Where he did clutch his prey."

The question is a lexicographical one: who in the present century re-invented the word "mole" in the counter-intelligence sense? Perhaps the Ministry of Defence will take up the matter? And will the KGB let us know whether in fact the equivalent Russian word for the small mammal of the family **Talpidae,** *namely* **krot,** *was used in Russian for the spying sense?*

Robert Burchfield
in the DAILY TELEGRAPH (*London*)

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Party—though the fact that it does not embody a *majority* of the voters is equally true of all European conservative parties and is indeed hardly to be expected in a multi-party system—is not the sense that it is insufficiently committed to democracy, as Mr Kristol believes, but exactly the contrary. It is widely felt that the Conservative Party has too easily fallen victim to democracy in the sense of giving too much scope to self-seeking individualism at the expense of its traditional commitment to public service. The explanation is, of course, that the freeing of the economy upon which society depends has meant encouraging and extolling individual entrepreneurship. Yet such a necessary release of energies will be exploited by some. What weakens the Conservative Party is not its remaining links with the aristocratic tradition, but its alleged indifference to some of the abuses of capitalism. It is not the Dukes who lose us votes but the "malefactors of great wealth" (in Teddy Roosevelt's useful phrase). We have so far avoided that route along the democratic way that leads to socialism; we have also to avoid that other route which the United States appears to be following—that which leads to plutocracy.

TOCQUEVILLE, OF COURSE, was right to observe that democracy was the dominant spirit of the age; and this dominance has persisted. But he never thought of this discovery as a cause for pure rejoicing. His interest in the Americans arose from his belief that they might through their own particular institutions and the habits of the people find ways of preventing democracy from doing too much harm. He was not unaware, as Mr Kristol at times seems to be, that the next stage after democracy was, in Aristotle's view, tyranny.

Britain preserved a rather different set of constraints upon democracy, of which a version of aristocracy was one. These constraints have been weakened in recent decades by the onslaught of egalitarianism. In my previous existence as a University teacher, I was in a position to observe the almost catastrophic effects of this aspect of democracy upon the English educational system. As a Conservative politician, I can now make a modest contribution to turning back that tide. That does not mean merely a challenge to socialism, but also to the democratic underpinnings that make socialism plausible.

I see no reason why Irving Kristol and I should not hold to different views of politics which differences of nationality and background as well as of temperament are always likely to produce. What puzzles me more than ever is why Mr Kristol believes himself to be a "conservative". The "forward-looking optimistic" spirit "speaking with a fraternal accent" might well seem, to those millions of Americans who do not benefit to the full from the achievements of the American economy, more provocative than would a "paternalist" spirit that tried to do something about their plight. Conservatism must have a "Tory" element or it is only the old "Manchester School".

Unpublished, Unknown

"The hope of the future lies in youth and not in crabbed old age hidebound by shibboleths and false tradition. . . ."
HARRY OXLEY, aged 68 years

Reading your letters again
I marvel at the broken grandeur
of your mind
unfooled truth like grasping of ice
the compassion and despair.
Unprivileged and without belief
you yet pondered
like the morning hare
alert in remote field
the madness and mediocrity
of a passing world
saw, through clouds of awful time,
thin gleams of sunlight
that suggested hope.
And still when I think
of all the great minds now
whose letters are not better
whose serene rages reveal
no more than you do
I am in tears to know
where you went wrong—
casualty of what system
victim of what indifferent gods?

William Oxley

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CONTROVERSY

The Battle of the Historians

A Report from Germany—By Josef Joffe

David Low (1933)

Fifteen years ago, the German historian Ernst Nolte opened a seminar at Harvard with the memorable question: "Where have we seen the idea of a Final Solution before—I mean before Hitler? . . ." Encountering only blank stares, Nolte exclaimed: "In the works of Marx, of course! Didn't Marx preach the annihilation of an entire class, namely the bourgeoisie? There you have it: the original idea of a Final Solution." By now, puzzlement had frozen into strained silence, and the American scholar Eric Goldhagen, a survivor of the Holocaust, tried a bit of friendly irony: "Professor Nolte, when Fiorello La Guardia, New York's famous liberal-reform Republican mayor, overwhelmed his political opponents, the Democrats, in the elections of 1932, the *New York Times* quoted him in a banner headline: 'We Really Murdered Them'. Herr Nolte, he did not mean it *literally*."

But Nolte, a Heidegger disciple who favours "metaphysical history", did not get the point then, nor has he apparently accepted the distinction between metaphor and mechanised mass murder ever since. In fact, last summer he returned to the theme with a vengeance that burst through the confines of a polite academic exchange, spilling into the pages of the national press. Within weeks, Nolte had triggered one of the most bizarre and yet revealing debates in the annals of German historiography. It embroiled everybody who is anybody in the profession, and it refuses to abate.

The opening volley, an essay by Nolte entitled "The Past That Will Not Pass Away", was published in West Germany's leading conservative daily, the *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*.[1] Beginning with a startling indictment, the essay builds up to a stupefying conclusion that seeks to demolish everything we know and presumably no longer need to ask about the history of the Holocaust. All the literature on National Socialism, Nolte had discovered, shares a "conspicuous failure", and that is "its inability or refusal to see" that the Nazis had not been the first in the business of mass deportations, death camps, and the "extermination of entire groups according to objective criteria". With the exception of the gas chambers (a new "technical process"), the Bolshevik heirs of Karl Marx had already set the example in the early 1920s. And so Nolte poses the "inevitable" question:

> "Did the National Socialists, did Hitler, carry out an 'Asiatic' deed perhaps only because they regarded themselves and their ilk as potential or real victims of an 'Asiatic' deed? Was not the Gulag Archipelago more of an origin (*originärer*) than Auschwitz? Was not the 'class murder' [committed] by the Bolsheviks logically and factually prior to the 'race murder' [committed] by the National Socialists?"

That passage needs to be "translated" for those who are not familiar with the vocabulary of neo-Hegelian history. In plain language, Nolte suggested that Auschwitz was but an imitation, that the Russian/"Asiatic" model deserves history's imprimatur as the one and only original. (In an earlier essay, "Between Myth and Revisionism",[2] Nolte had made the point in all its baldness: "the so-called [sic] annihilation of the Jews during the Third Reich was a reaction or a distorted copy and not a first act or an original.") Nor did Nolte stop with this compliment to Lenin, Stalin, and their comrades. Masked as seemingly open questions, the insinuations move softly toward the real purpose of the exercise—the recasting of 20th-century European history. Did Auschwitz, he asks, "perhaps grow out of a past that would not pass away?" Did Hitler, in other words, merely do to the Jews what "the Red terror" had done to "the Whites", inflicting an "Asiatic deed" on the Jews for fear of suffering the same fate at the hands of the Communist monster? Yes, he concludes, "there is probably a causal nexus".

To call this a forced argument is a polite understatement,

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[1] Ernst Nolte, "Vergangenheit, die nicht vergehen will", *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, 6 June 1986. This article was an abbreviated version of a longer address Nolte was to have delivered in Frankfurt at the 1986 *Römerberggespräche*, an annual gathering of public figures and intellectuals, from which he was suddenly disinvited.

[2] "Between Myth and Revisionism: The Third Reich in the Perspective of the 1980s", in H. W. Koch, ed., *Aspects of the Third Reich* (Macmillan, 1985).

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since it defies the most rudimentary canons of reasoning. To put it in abstract terms, Nolte postulated a monstrous daisy-chain of destruction that obeyed the following "logic": *A* (Hitler), being afraid of *B* (the menace of Bolshevism), slaughtered *C* (the Jews) in pre-emptive self-defence. A similarly freakish plea—which would dispatch guilt by projecting it—can also be found in his "Between Myth and Revisionism". Here again, Nolte uses his favourite tool—the insinuating question, the contorted prose—to construe a direct connection between Jewish "aggression" and Nazi "retaliation". Might not Hitler be "allowed to treat the Jews as prisoners of war and by this means to intern them" when Britain declared war in 1939? After all, a few days later, Chaim Weizmann had vowed on behalf of the Jewish Agency that "Jews in the whole world would fight on the side of England. . . ."

That "declaration of War" and Nolte's insinuation of a "consequential" Nazi response, drew a bitterly ironic retort from the Berlin philosopher Ernst Tugendhat: How do we explain "the persecution and victimisation [of Jews] *before* the fall of 1939—including that of my own grandfather?" Jabbering about the *Weltjudentum*'s conspiracies against the *Reich* has been a stock-in-trade of neo-Nazi propaganda. Yet here was a serious, if also stubbornly obsessive, academic historian, who had won international acclaim with his *Three Faces of Fascism* (1963), providing professorial grist for the mill of the beer-hall crowd. Nor was this the only surprise in Year One after Bitburg. For two decades, Nolte had been a one-man cottage industry, attracting neither disciples nor real foes in the profession. Suddenly, he was not alone.

A SLIM VOLUME with a long title also appeared in 1986 in the West German bookshops—*Two Kinds of Doom: The Destruction of the German Reich and the End of European Jewry*.[3] Its author, Andreas Hillgruber, is a Professor of Contemporary History at the University of Cologne. Like Nolte, Hillgruber had worked away in relative obscurity, making his mark on the profession as a respected student of German diplomatic history. Along with Nolte, he suddenly gained notoriety by plunging into murkier waters with *Two Kinds of Doom*. And like Nolte, Hillgruber made for an inviting target.

It may not be altogether fair to quote from publicity material; but in this case it seems an economical way of driving straight to the point. And it helps to bypass the vexing habit of Nolte, Hillgruber *et al.* of shrouding their arguments in velvety questions, of avoiding falsifiable propositions where innuendo will do, and of squeezing the German language for every ounce of obfuscation that it so richly contains.

"Hillgruber's spectacular work [reads the blurb on the back of the book] comes out against the conventional opinion which holds that the destruction of the German Reich was an answer in kind to the atrocities of the Nazi régime. [He] establishes that the amputation of the Reich . . . had become an Allied war objective long before Auschwitz."

But why construe as spectacular discovery what is familiar to the professional and the informed layman alike?[4] Of course, the Allies did not set out to destroy the *Reich* in order to punish the Germans for Auschwitz (although that shock richly increased the revulsion). Of course, the victors followed de Gaulle's classic motto: "*Pas de Reich, retour aux Allemagnes* (No more *Reich*; once more, many Germanies)" in order finally to undo that enormous central powerhouse which had twice tried to impose its hegemony on the rest of Europe. By implying that the Allies were *not* motivated by moral outrage and then elaborating in meticulous detail when exactly Roosevelt, Churchill and Stalin decided to do what to Germany, Hillgruber was evidently setting up a hidden agenda.

To say, if by many turns and twists of indirection, that the Allied war effort was driven by the age-old quest for power and advantage is far more subtle and singular than the shop-worn tactic of establishing "immoral equivalence" by balancing, say, Auschwitz against Dresden. If Nolte would like to spread the guilt around a bit (in *Germany and the Cold War* [1974], he claimed that all the great powers have had "their own Hitler periods") Hillgruber's metahistorical approach is simply *amoral*. If you look at the "Third *Reich*" *sub specie aeternitatis*, and then belabour the obvious by pointing out that the Allies behaved as states have always done, you score twice.

Not only do you unmask as sheer posturing what came afterwards in the guise of "Re-Education" and "Nuremberg"—you dispatch the issue of morality altogether. If the Allies merely re-enacted the oldest game of nations, then the debate moves comfortably from the level of moralising to the level of historicising. The question is no longer; "Who was good and who was evil", but becomes: "What is the verdict of history?" Since the Allies' real purpose was naked power and the reordering of Europe, let us examine the "systemic" consequences—the way we look at the effects of the Thirty Years War or the Congress of Vienna. In short, Hillgruber means to say, let History sit in judgment, and not the Nuremberg Tribunal.

THIS IS WHY the bulk of Hillgruber's tract is not devoted to "the end of European Jewry"; that essay remains brief and curiously uninvolved. His real concern is the Eastern Front in 1944-45, a collapse he renders in the language of *Götterdämmerung*. When he writes about the Russians, he invokes the vernacular of secular catastrophe: "orgy of revenge", "mass rape", "arbitrary murder", "indiscriminate deportations". As it shifts to the German side, the story turns into a *Nibelungen*-like saga of loyalty and transcendence. There are the "desperate and sacrificial exertions of the

[3] Andreas Hillgruber, *Zweierlei Untergang: Die Zerschlagung des Deutschen Reiches und das Ende des europäischen Judentums* (Berlin, Siedler, 1986).

[4] For the extensive literature on the Allies' plans for Germany's post-War future, see Hermann Graml, *Die Alliierten und die Teilung Deutschlands* (*The Allies and the Partition of Germany*) (Frankfurt, Fischer, 1985), especially the bibliography on pp. 242-49.

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German Army". There is the "bulwark" of the Eastern front which "shielded the population against the flood" that was the Red Army. And there was the "ethics of responsibility" that motivated commanders and Nazi functionaries who would do their best to "prevent the worst". (By contrast, Hillgruber reduces the Officers' Plot against Hitler on 20 July 1944 to the quixotic "ethics of pure conviction".[5])

The "desperate battle of defence" was not just to protect "centuries-old settlement space" and the "homeland of millions". An even nobler purpose was evidently to save History itself, or in Hillgruber's opaque terminology, the "autonomy of the German Reich's great-power status (*die Bewahrung der Eigenständigkeit der Grossmachtstellung des Deutschen Reiches*)". Alas, we are led to conclude, British machinations , American naivety and Soviet greed brought about the "*Reich*'s demise and, with it, the collapse of the European Centre". With that dénouement, the Fates decreed yet another unforgivable outcome: the end of "Prussia's and the German *Reich*'s role as mediator . . . for all of Europe". In a larger sense, as Hillgruber muses in conclusion, "all of Europe was the loser in the catastrophe of 1945".

GOOD, NOW WE KNOW. All of Europe "lost" because it was liberated from Nazi imperialism. It was not Germany's hubris, let alone the uncouth treatment of Jews, Gypsies, and other *Untermenschen*, that led to retribution and downfall. Hitler might have started that war, but what is another historical grab for supremacy *sub specie aeternitatis*—and in a state system where lots of respectable people, from Charles V to Napoleon I, have played the same game over and over again? If you want to talk responsibility, every page in Hillgruber's little book whispers: "Let's talk about History and Consequences—e.g. America's and Soviet Russia's lasting intrusion into the heart of the Continent. And thus the tract deftly dispatches the burden, laying it softly, softly, on the doorsteps of Roosevelt, Churchill, and Stalin. See what *you* have done? You went after the "German *Reich*", but the true loser was Europe. Hillgruber's "is not an evil book", noted the Harvard historian Charles S. Maier delicately in *The New Republic*. "But it is badly balanced [and] opens the way to apologia. . . ."[6]

The debate was joined when Professor Jürgen Habermas, West Germany's leading social philosopher on the Left, published an impassioned, rambling rebuttal in the Hamburg weekly *Die Zeit*. A disciple of Adorno and Horkheimer, Habermas accused Nolte, Hillgruber and others of "apologetic tendencies" and of a "revisionism" which would first try to sterilise and then to "shake off" Germany's grim past. The ultimate purpose of that exercise was to transcend an outworn "obsession with guilt" and to "refurbish" Germany's broken national identity by shameful means.[7] A few weeks later, Joachim Fest, the author of a best-selling Hitler biography (*Adolf Hitler*, 1973) was stung into action. In the pages of the *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung* (which he co-edits), Fest weighed in on the side of Nolte and company with an even longer piece titled "The Remembrance We Owe".[8]

Habitually a brilliant writer and *feuilletoniste*, Fest tried to buttress Nolte's murky ruminations with a *tour de force* more valiant than persuasive. He began cautiously enough: Hitler's "will to annihilation" might not have been totally inspired by the "threat of annihilation" emanating from the Russian Revolution. Still, it was "hard to believe" in the absence of a link. For there were those "terrifying impressions exuding from Russia"—reports of wholesale deportations and the "extermination of entire population groups"—which "provided a backdrop of reality" for Hitler's "extirpation fantasies". Resting his case in defence of Nolte's "causal nexus", Fest concluded: "To present such considerations and to establish connections cannot be inadmissible. . . ."

In response to Habermas, the historian Klaus Hildebrandt, a former student of Hillgruber, also defended Nolte and his intellectual companions in the lofty name of academic freedom (*FAZ*, 31 July 1986). Nobody must impose a *Frageverbot*, hence rule out questions that seek to unearth "parallels" or "models" with regard to the "quality of destruction" residing in Nazism and Communism. The only problem with that plea (as the historian Eberhard Jäckel, a Social Democrat, noted in *Die Zeit*) was that nobody had accused Nolte of raising inadmissible questions. The real issue was that Nolte had posed a *disingenuous* question which tried to link the Nazi gas chambers to the Bolshevik menace and to construct "guilt by insinuation" rather than shoulder the burden of empirical proof. If evidence there was, it consisted mainly of *post hoc, ergo propter hoc*. Nor was Nolte saved by another sally in the pages of the *FAZ* (14 November), when Fest's colleague, Johann-Georg Reissmüller, tried a slightly different tack.

What about the systematic persecution and murder in the early 1930s of the "Kulaks", the freeholding peasants who refused to be "collectivised" under Stalin? That was among "the vilest of mass crimes committed by the Bolsheviks", Reissmüller wrote, and, what is more, there was plenty of information about that "monstrous event" at the time. Though Reissmüller did not openly set up the fate of the Kulaks as a "model" for Hitler, he seemed to suggest as much. So Richard Löwenthal (a Social Democrat and an internationally known Sovietologist) wrote to counter that suggestion. The "slow mass murder [of the Kulaks] was unknown to the world at large for a long time." That information reached the West "in the course of World War II"—in other words, long *after* the Nuremberg race laws were enacted and when the ghettos and gas chambers were already a reality. Hitler, wrote Löwenthal, did not import the idea of the Final Solution from Russia; he had inherited it from his

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[5] These terms—*Verantwortungsethik* and *Gesinnungsethik*—were coined by the German sociologist Max Weber to distinguish between two types of morality: *the ethics of responsibility*, whose moral worth is not determined by intentions but by socio-political consequences; and *the ethics of pure conviction*, where abstract notions of moral goodness or duty take absolute precedence over feasibility or the longer-term results of an action.

[6] Charles S. Maier, "Immoral Equivalence", *The New Republic*, December 1986, pp. 36-41.

[7] Jürgen Habermas, "Eine Art Schadensabwicklung", *Die Zeit*, 11 July 1986.

[8] Joachim Fest, "Die geschuldete Erinnerung", *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, 29 August 1986.

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mentor Dietrich Eckart who died in 1924 and whom Hitler would fondly cite for the rest of his own life.

Lest a non-German reader lose the last thread of meaning in this labyrinthine debate, let me restate the three key issues. Who was first in the business of mass murder: the Bolsheviks or the Nazis? Did the Red model somehow "inspire" or "cause" the Brown model? How "singular" was the Holocaust when compared to the boneyards left behind by Lenin, Stalin, and Pol Pot?

To all of these questions, the historian Eberhard Jäckel provides perhaps the best answer.[9] It is true, he wrote, that ours is the century of mass murder, inflicted on the innocents either haphazardly or systematically, with the inefficiencies of the "old ways" or the "economies of scale" afforded by the death factories. Yet the Holocaust was unique because

> "never before had a State . . . decided and so declared that a certain group of people—including the old, women, children, and babies—was to be killed *in toto* if possible, while executing that decision with all the means available to a State."

Russian Bolsheviks like the early *Cheka* boss Martyn Latsis (quoted by Joachim Fest as Exhibit A for the defence) might have talked about "eradicating the bourgeoisie as a class". Perhaps he meant it literally, perhaps it was only a bloody metaphor uttered in the midst of a civil war. (The war against the Jews was rather one-sided.) Still, such an aspiration was destined to remain a pale abstraction in the face of Heinrich Himmler's notorious speech on 6 October 1943:

> "We grappled with the question: What about the women and the children? Here, too [continued the *Reichsführer* of the *SS*], I have decided to opt for the clearest of solutions. I did not think myself entitled to exterminate the males . . . and allow the children to grow up as avengers against our sons and grandsons. The hard decision had to be taken to make this people vanish from the earth. . . ."[10]

Finally, Jäckel reminds us of the well-established record: "On many occasions, Hitler explained why he wanted to remove and kill the Jews." His reasons add up to "a complex and coherent structure of thought". And in it there is no room for "murders committed by the Bolshevists" or "any particular fear of them", which the revisionists have invoked as model or causal precursor of the Holocaust. Nor was Hitler, "the Aryan, afraid of Slavic or Jewish sub-humans." It is, thus as absurd to insinuate "pre-emptive murder" as it is to transfigure Hitler-Germany's war of conquest into a "pre-emptive war" of defence.

Why, then, this debate? And why now? A telling clue might be found in Hillgruber's tract, where a brutally frank paragraph elucidates the meaning of Germany's surrender in 1945. For the "victims" of the concentration camps and prisoners, it was surely a day of "liberation". Yet it is "not appropriate to apply [that term] to the fate of the nation as a whole." No mainstream voice has ever put it so crudely. In polite society the rule has been to refer to V-E Day as "the most tragic and doubt-inspiring paradox for each of us". And why?—asked Theodor Heuss, the first West German President. "Because we were saved and destroyed at one and the same time."

Today, nobody knows how many Germans felt genuinely "liberated" on 8 May 1945, but *then* nobody would have dared to say otherwise. Though retribution was rather brief and cursory, though Adenauer did hardly worse than Talleyrand in regaining respectability for his country, the burden has remained. For those old enough to remember, it is the humiliation of defeat or the loss of land and glory that poisons the notion of liberation. For the rest—for those younger than, say 55—the mortgage is more subtle and enduring. They had no part in the "Teutonic deed" that was Auschwitz, but they had to live with the indelible stigma of moral inferiority.

They came to adulthood without any sense of nation, continuity, or pride. Theirs was a half-nation that could at best draw a Calvinist sense of redemption from the miraculous economic rebirth. But whereas Americans or Frenchmen grow up with *The Star-Spangled Banner* or Bastille Day, the post-War West German generation did not even have a decent national holiday, or any other symbols or traditions that bind the individual to his tribe. If anything did reach out from the past, it was the stifling, fearsome tentacle of national guilt.

It was only a matter of time before the West Germans would try to sever it. Until the 1950s, they had proved their qualities by acting as a model Ally and super-European, while literally buying redemption with vast restitution payments to the survivors and to Israel. By the late 1960s, however, they began to stir. During the Viet Nam War, it was the demonstrators of the New Left who raised, still unconsciously, the question of "moral equivalence". Didn't My Lai show that the "re-educators" and "liberators" were no better than their own parents? In 1982, their younger siblings drew a straight line between General Stroop's butchers murdering the last Jews of the Warsaw Ghetto and General Sharon's troops beleaguering the PLO in Beirut. And presto—what is the moral difference between the *SS* and the heirs of their victims?

With the battle against *Pershing* and Cruise missiles uniting Social Democrats and Greens, starry-eyed idealists and old-style Communists, a "movement of national re-awakening"[11] had finally appeared on the German scene. The Federal Republic is an "occupied country", thundered the former SPD mayor of West Berlin, Heinrich Albertz, and the Americans are conspiring to turn it into a "shooting gallery of the superpowers".

The first true "national revolt" since 1945 was driven by

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[9] Eberhard Jäckel, "Die elende Praxis der Untersteller", *Die Zeit*, 13 September 1986.

[10] Heinrich Himmler, *Geheimreden 1933 bis 1945*, ed. Bradley F. Smith and Agnes F. Peterson, preface by Joachim Fest (Propyläen Verlag, 1974), p. 169.

[11] Thus Wolfgang Pohrt, "Ein Volk, ein Reich, ein Frieden", in his *Endstation: Über die Wiedergeburt der Nation* (Berlin, Rotbuchverlag, 1982), p.76.

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two classic engines of all such movements: the conviction of collective victimisation, and tribal moral superiority. In *The New Yorker* (5 April 1982), Jane Kramer had noted:

> "For young Germans, the idea that their country has a mission in a damned world is a kind of redemption. They have no history to attach to with any pride, and it is intoxicating for them now to think of themselves as victims of a madness other than their own. This is why there is an almost expiatory fervor to so much of the new pacifist politics."

THOUGH SEPARATED BY time and ideological colour, the Battle of the German Historians and the War against the American Missiles are clearly related—like two brothers fighting over patrimony or primogeniture. In both cases, the real object of conquest was the past that would not pass away. The young German Peace Marchers targeted Western nuclear weapons and their American purveyors but, in truth, they reacted against the grating legacy of the lost war. The rubble had long ago been cleared away, but the Germans were still the prime victims of the new order: partitioned by alien superpowers, robbed of a national identity, chained to the *status quo* by forces they could not control. By overturning the *ancien régime* the rebels would triumph twice: against their parents, who had indentured themselves to the victors; and against a system that denied them their national self.

Their "progressive" purpose—national reassertion and the reclamation of moral worth—was no different from the quest of the revisionist historians and the traditional ideologues on the outer fringe of Helmut Kohl's Centre-Right majority. Indeed, the neo-nationalist campaign of the Left, laying siege to the post-War bastions of legitimacy, was *destined* to trigger a competitive response on the Right. Yet, "the War of the German Succession" posed a nasty dilemma for the Establishment. It could not allow the Left to capture the flag, but neither could it imitate the Left's simple "Us against Them" strategy. For "They" happened to be NATO, America, and the West. The problem was how to win the moral-ideological battle without losing the country's Western cocoon—how to be good Germans without turning into bad Allies.

This problem has been with us since the end of World War II. Though Conservatives and National Liberals had been among the standard-bearers of 20th-century German nationalism, that option has closed to their post-1945 heirs who picked up the pieces to acquire a controlling share in the new enterprise. Germany's ultra-nationalist fling had ended in catastrophe; no strength could be drawn from yesterday's shattered idols. And under the loaded guns of the occupiers, there was no road to rehabilitation but the internationalist one—straight into the Atlantic and European community.

Nor was this particularly painful. Abroad, self-denial proved the stepping stone of self-assertion. And domestically the alliance with the West provided a succession of Centre-Right governments with the underpinnings of legitimacy and long-term tenure. For once the Germans were not alone but on the side of the stronger battalions. If NATO yielded a shelter and a role, the European Community opened markets and a legitimate outlet for West German energies.

Yet 40 years later the *ersatz* nationalism of Europeanism and anti-Communism had paled; and into that vacuum stepped the Left, eager to push the real thing. Could the Centre-Right come up with a safe moral equivalent—an infusion of good feeling without nasty anti-Western aftereffects? Perhaps the antidote could be found in the small town of Bitburg.

The Kohl Government had been dreading the day when the Allies would reconvene to celebrate the 40th anniversary of V-E Day. A "splendid moment in our great history" for Churchill, 8 May 1945 symbolised the greatest catastrophe in the chequered history of German national unity. But there was promise, too—if an American President could be lured to a military cemetery where he would pay homage to Germany's fallen of World War II. Bonding victors and vanquished in mutual respect, a magnanimous gesture would at last lift the stigma and seal the return to normality—if not bury the past altogether. Instead, the past came back with a vengeance—uniting virtually all of America in an outcry of revulsion. In Bitburg, President Reagan and Helmut Kohl discovered that it was easier to inter the dead than the symbols of the War—especially when they came graven in stone like the inscriptions of the *Waffen-SS*. Forty years were not enough.

FOR THE GERMAN CONSERVATIVES, Bitburg came as a shock.[12] After 40 years of rehabilitation under Western auspices, there was still no absolution. The old question remained: how to unshoulder the burden, how to reestablish pride and moral worth. The Battle of the Historians was surely launched among the graves of Bitburg on 8 May 1985. If the past could not be laid to rest, it had to be reconstructed. If images of cattle-cars and crematoria refused to subside, then the films must be taken in hand by the professionals for re-editing and retouching. If the ancestral stain could not be scrubbed off, perhaps the crimes could be made to pale in the blinding light cast on those of others.

All history is backward-looking politics; thus Bitburg was more than a German-American confrontation over the past. More important, it was also the scene of an *intra-German* battle over the future. To have an American President dispatch the moral mortgage had promised a triple advantage in the contest for domestic power. First, the clasp of hands across the graves would have proved to the electorate that America was still West Germany's best friend. Secondly, it would have demonstrated that the Christian Democrats could "deliver" the Americans, that they were the best guardians of that profitable partnership. Third, it would have flummoxed the

[12] In "The Past That Will Not Pass Away", Ernst Nolte asked what would have happened if Chancellor Adenauer "had refused to visit Arlington Military Cemetery, arguing that men were buried there who had participated in terror attacks against the German civilian population. . . ."

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Opposition, those Greens and Social Democrats who have a different future in mind for West Germany—who would loosen, if not cut, the tie that binds; who worry more about American *Pershings* than Soviet *SS-20*s; and who dream of a *Mitteleuropa* "zone of peace" where Germany could once more assume its traditional role as "third force" between East and West.

AND THIS IS WHERE the Battle of the Historians intersects with the battle over political legitimacy and domestic power.

Tied to the Alliance and America, the Centre-Right cannot play the nationalist (in essence, anti-American) card which the Left has brandished since the beginning of this decade. Nor can it re-enact the historic game of Right-wing nationalism and revive Germany's old "mission in the East" above and beyond that basic quantum of *détente* which pays homage to the realities of Soviet power. For to move toward East Berlin and Moscow would threaten the three traditional pillars of the Centre-Right's tenure: abroad, the tie to NATO neighbours and to the United States; at home, the anti-Communist consensus which would have to be sacrificed for the sake of a real option in the East.

Bitburg demonstrated that the escape routes from the darkest chambers of German history remained locked—and at a time when the traditional mainstays of legitimacy in the Federal Republic were under assault from the neo-nationalists of the Left. And their more radicalised battalions want *eine andere Republik*, a radically transformed political and social system: with a lot more Socialism-cum-Ecologism at home and a great deal less Atlanticism abroad.

From a Western perspective, the neo-nationalism of the Right, though linked to steadfast anti-Communism, is hardly more reassuring. On the one hand, the New Historical Revisionism clearly functions to discredit the Left: it will *not* increase the attraction of Socialism (let alone the Soviet Union) among German voters if history's First Prize for mayhem and mass murder goes to the Bolshevik disciples of Marx. (And that may explain why the Battle of the Historians unfolded, basically, on a Left-Right split.) On the other hand, it is by no means self-evident that Messrs Nolte and Hillgruber wrote out of love for America and the West.

For Hillgruber, the United States is ranked alongside the Soviet Union when it comes to parcelling out blame for the "destruction" of the *europäische Mitte* (the "European centre"), i.e. Germany. The reader will look in vain for the celebration of a West German identity steeped in the country's new democratic traditions and Western affiliations (though the alliance with the West and West German democracy are definitely linked by a powerful "causal nexus"). Instead, the Revisionists try to sift pride from Germany's brief historic career as a great power as they pick among the rubble in search of a post-Holocaust identity; and so historians like Hillgruber assign the beginning of *finis Germaniae* to the Allied conspiracy against the *Reich* and the collapse of the Eastern front. Why stop so early in the calendar? Why not start with the home-made conspiracy against the democratic experiment of Weimar, which paved the way for Hitler and then for the world's war against Germany?

THE HISTORIAN Michael Stürmer has claimed: "Whoever supplies memory, shapes concepts, and interprets the past . . . will win the future"—one in which West Germans remain "the keystone in the European arch of the Atlantic system." But though Habermas has not previously been conspicuous as an advocate of Atlanticism,[13] he is surely right in noting that his generation's "proudest" achievement, the "unconditional acceptance of Western political culture", cannot be buttressed with revisionist legerdemain. Indeed, that opening was won *against* that anti-Western *Mitteleuropa* ideology "which our revisionists would try to warm up with their geopolitical ballyhoo". The only patriotism that "will not alienate us from the West" (Habermas concludes) must be mined from the country's democratic constitutional tradition.

Nor can such "ballyhoo" win a moral future for the Federal Republic, even though in "Year Two After Bitburg" West German politicos had picked up the historians' banner for some vigorous flag-waving in the electoral campaign of 1987.

"We have to tell the whole truth", proclaimed Franz Josef Strauss, who runs the Bavarian affiliate of Helmut Kohl's Christian Democratic Party. And that truth must not be "limited to the atrocities committed in the name of Germany". To leave out the "barbarism" of the others amounted to "historical forgery" which would "destroy Germany's national identity" and continue to feed a "permanent flood of guilt feelings". The appeal to Right-wing nationalism, repeated *ad infinitum* in Strauss's campaign speeches, did not help: his Christian Social Union lost 400,000 votes in the January 1987 election, dropping almost one percentage point.

Nor can it really help the Germans as a whole to know that Stalin and Pol Pot share History's dock with Hitler. Even if German crimes were not "singular", as the historian Christian Meier wrote in the concluding article in the *Frankfurter Allgemeine* controversy, "what would that do for us or our standing in the world? . . ." In short, can the future really be conquered by wringing solace from a refurbished past?

The Victorians had an answer worth pondering: "The happiest women, like the happiest nations, have *no* history. . . ."

[13] On the contrary, Marxian loyalties were important to him; and when he was widely quoted to the effect that the extremists in the '68 student rebellion were "Left-Fascists", he claimed that he had been misquoted and misunderstood. In the present debate he referred to the Soviet Kulak tragedy as "an expulsion (*Vertreibung*)"; he subsequently corrected himself and conceded that the barbarity was more correctly to be described as "destruction (*Vernichtung*)", *Die Zeit*, 7 November 1986.

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LETTERS

Ethics Vacuum

I CANNOT IMAGINE what fills the courses of the Gannett Centre for Media Studies. Judging from John Merrill's letter (March), one acquires a shallow smattering of Immanuel Kant and not a lot besides. Mr Merrill's generalised assertions about American society and government amount to no more than slurred abuse of the kind heard in a Manhattan yuppie bar during the small hours of a Saturday morning.

As to his argument, such as it is: he says that neither the People nor the Government have any ethical standards; so journalists have none, since the media merely reflect the standards of society. Second, he argues that shoddy, mendacious, intrusive journalists only give the public what it wants.

The latter argument is commonly used by heroin-pushers. It sounds odd as a criterion for those who are supposed to be respectable professionals. As to the former premise, American society may indeed be ruggedly competitive. But—whatever the conditions in the Gannett Institute may be—ethical standards do exist in the United States. They are shared widely among the population, and have been discerned in the halls of government, coded into the criminal law, anti-trust legislation, laws of contract, and so on.

As to Mr Merrill's *ergo propter hoc*: an interesting survey (conducted by Professors Stanley Rothman and Robert Lichter of Smith College and Georgetown University) showed that the American media élite were radically *at odds* with the religious, political, and ethical standards of the population at large. Mr Merrill's apparent ignorance of this survey is curious. The work was conducted under the auspices of the Research Institute of International Change at Columbia University. The Gannett Centre and (I presume) Mr Merrill are also at Columbia. Of course it is a big university, but the survey was carried out nine years ago. Surely news of it should have got round to Mr Merrill by now?

HERB GREER

Manchester

Fair to Graham Greene

YOU have been going on and on about Graham Greene (Leopold Labedz, "The View from Greeneland", January 1986, and the additional quotations in Dorothy Pitt-Johnson's letter, "News from Greeneland', January 1987). The point presumably is that he may be an excellent novelist but a muddle-headed dabbler in world politics. That may be. But wouldn't it be fair to give a quotation or two on the other side of the argument? He has on occasion defended, or explained, himself; and it is only right that it should be on the record.

I offer the following text for your collection, taken from a report in the *London Evening Standard* (25 February 1987), following the Gorbachov "Peace Forum" in Moscow at which Greene was an honoured guest and felt maltreated by the Western press ("he was described as everything from slightly dotty to seriously misguided"). Evidently what was overlooked was "the old pro's penchant for a joke".

> "And a joke (misunderstood and misquoted) was indeed the heart of the matter, or so it now appears according to Greene's own latest explanation. He announces this morning from Cap d'Antibes that the widely quoted line about him preferring to live in Russia rather than California should in fact read 'die' where it now reads 'live'.
>
> 'Since my main fear has always been senility', he says drily, 'I felt death would arrive far more quickly in a Gulag than in the sunshine of California.' He explains too: 'I said that Russia took writers far more seriously than America so the writer often ended his days in a Gulag. . . .'
>
> Greene turns a mocking gaze on all we quill-drivers, accusing his friend Auberon Waugh, for example, of a record in the inaccuracy stakes—'10 errors of fact in one interview', he maintains. Today Greene bitterly laments having cracked his joke 20 years ago: a joke was 'a fatal mistake when talking to journalists. . . .'"

THOMAS R. CROSSE

Cambridge

Unwise Men?

I READ WITH dismay (March 1987) the "Books Encountered" capsule review of *The Wise Men: Six Friends and the Worlds They Made*, by Walter Isaacson and Evan Thomas. Having reviewed the book at some length in *National Review*, I marvelled at the blindness of "R.M.", who merely found the book "enormous (853 pages) and reasonably priced" and the ultimate compliment: While the authors are with *Time*, "their book transcends it". On the contrary, anyone who read the *Time* interview with Gorbachov would say the book complements the magazine's politics.

The book is a fancied-up version of contemporary anti-anti-Communism. The book's theme is that anti-Communism and anti-Sovietism are incompatible with liberalism. The Six Wise Men only became wise when they gave up their public/private mistrust of the Soviet Union.

I enclose a copy of my review with copious extracts from this wretched book for your consideration.

ARNOLD BEICHMAN

Hoover Institution
Stanford, California

I CANNOT AGREE that *The Wise Men*'s theme is as Arnold Beichman describes it. "Those who dealt with the Soviets firsthand", it plainly declares, "were generally unanimous in their assessment. . . . 'The issue', said Harriman, 'is a free society as against dictatorship.'"

True, the book admits that its subjects put their case in black-and-white terms to prise Congress out of nascent isolationism. True, it echoes Kennan in seeing dangers in too sweeping an interpretation of the Truman Doctrine, whether in Europe or in Viet Nam. But it in no way suggests that the Marshall Plan forced Stalin into isolation and antagonism (which Arnold Beichman implies in his review). Instead, the book categorically describes Stalin as "anything but a trustworthy ally", and refers to its subjects' hopes for "a stern but stable modus vivendi between the US and the USSR". "Without doubt", it also concludes, "the Marshall Plan remains their purest and greatest achievement, power used to its best end."

Adding grace notes to a noble story is not, in my view either revisionist or "wretched", but simply part of the historian's task. Having done so myself in writing of this period, I can only salute the greater labours of others.

RICHARD MAYNE

London

What Values?

IN Patrick Middleton's reply ("Objection Overruled", ENCOUNTER, March) to my response to his original article on "Georgian Values" (ENCOUNTER, July-August 1986), one enormous question is begged. If the values which Mrs Thatcher and I outlined were not Victorian, then what exactly were the values of the Victorians?

Perhaps Mr Middleton would enlighten us.

JEFFREY RICHARDS

Department of History
University of Lancaster

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Thwaite, Booker, Solzhenitsyn

NOT for the first time Anthony Thwaite ("Booker 1986", ENCOUNTER, February) defends the Booker Prize, a list of whose assailants now includes "a posse of horseflies". Now if the beast were healthy, a flick of the tail, a shake of the noble mane should suffice.

I watched the Booker performances on TV. In his speech of acceptance the winner had nothing to say about literature, the state of the novel, or the contributions of his fellow competitors. Instead we learned that he liked money and that his bank manager and publisher would be pleased. He was led off, glass in hand, to be interviewed—and continued in similar vein.

Faced with vulgarity one seeks dignity. I recalled another prize, another man, who had nothing to say about money or publishers. He reached the platform by climbing "thousands of steps—unyielding, steep, slippery with frost . . .", but the comparison is too shameful to pursue. One word dominated his speech: truth. (For Solzhenitsyn's Nobel Prize speech, see *The Listener*, 14 September 1972.)

It now becomes perfectly simple to resolve the Booker business. First one must read *The Old Devils*. Then one should consider Thwaite's statement: "In fact the Booker is internationally recognised as the world's top fiction prize." Finally one should ponder Solzhenitsyn's advice: "Trust not your own brother: trust your own eye, even crooked."

PETER DUNSMORE

London

Ireland Betrayal

AS AN IRISHWOMAN and a subscriber to ENCOUNTER I wish to protest strongly against your inclusion of Mr Edward Pearce's article "On the Betrayal of Ireland" in the February 1987 issue. While I cannot deny that as a country we are both broke and conservative—as is quite evident to anyone living here and/or aware of the critical and analytical discussions of these aspects of what Mr Pearce calls our "lifelong uraemic condition" in the Irish media, I fail to see why a periodical of ENCOUNTER's standard should stoop to the level of snide, patronising, and facile journalism. Mr Pearce's language, ". . . on the altar of Western Europe's dirty, drunken, windbagging and evil backyard", to quote just one of his colourful outbursts, has the hallmarks of second-rate undergraduate debating.

He seems to have made no effort to understand the complexities of modern Ireland, North or South: such as the 400-year-old antagonisms and prejudices that bedevil the North or the difficulties here in the South of rapid economic and sociological change. Industrialisation, urbanisation, and population growth in the 1960s and early 1970s, as well as the agricultural boom arising from CAP, led to expectations which were disappointed by recession, inflation, and unwise borrowing in the late 1970s and early '80s. Some of this at least could have been researched and analysed by Mr Pearce as the basis of a thoughtful commentary on the current state of affairs. Instead, he wrote for cheap laughs, coming to a conclusion that the IRA have been chalking on walls in every county of Ireland: BRITS OUT!

So it is time for ENCOUNTER to live up to its reputation as a forum for intelligent and analytical debate and to publish a well-researched and balanced article on contemporary Ireland. It owes its readers no less.

AS FOR those of us who live in this "very backward country, still close to the black medieval midnight of literal Christian dogma" and embroiled in "this intestinal Celtic side-show" according to Mr Pearce, ENCOUNTER could play a role in the dialogue and cooperation I hope for. Contrary to all Mr Pearce seems to think about Western Europe's "dirty, drunken, windbagging and evil backyard", many of us would not want to live anywhere else. I, for one, love every stick and stone of it, the people, way of life, our music and literature, and the fact that it is a country where anything can happen, except silence when provoked!

HONOR O'CONNOR

Dublin

AS A devoted reader of ENCOUNTER since the days of Irving Kristol, I am astonished that your distinguished journal should have published Edward Pearce's self-indulgent and vicious outpourings on Ireland ("On the Betrayal of Ireland", February).

Whatever the personalities of those currently in power in the North, Mr Pearce, as a political commentator who should know better, chooses to forget any historical context in his diatribe. There are, of course, no excuses for the violence and bloodshed—and, in this, one is happy to share a certain amount of disgust. But there are explanations why the Province has fallen into the hands of sectarian politicians and why a large working-class vote has gone against the traditions of its European counterparts.

Mr Pearce, though, chooses to talk about himself rather than enlighten. To understand is not to forgive, but to understand is a precondition of finding a way forward. He tells the reader that the Rev. Ian Paisley—"pattering rhetoric, narrow cunning, low intelligence and a pitiful lack of education"—represents the Northern Ireland "we all know". The Province is, to all those who *do* know it, full of decent people on both sides who long for a way forward. Those "barbarian qualities" he ascribes to the Protestant North produced, for instance, four Presidents of the United States.

BUT IT is hardly surprising that he fails to understand. Anyone who describes the Province as "Western Europe's dirty, drunken, windbagging and evil backyard" is clearly in the business of hating rather than understanding. Edward Pearce's shameful crudeness, bigotry and ignorance surely make him quite unfit to deplore these very same defects in others? His intemperate rantings disqualify him from being taken seriously as a critic. His destructive words are deeply offensive and insulting to all those involved in working towards a resolution in Northern Ireland.

MARGOT REDMAYNE

London

YOUR LETTER-WRITERS on Ireland are united in making no hard evidential point that I can discern. My article had two major arguments: that the economies of the Republic and the Province were in calamitous and terminal condition, and that the politics of the Republic were hopelessly set back by the survival of a clerical power with a working veto. Since the Republic's debt at US$33 billion is 60% of Argentina's when the Irish Republic has 8% of Argentina's population, I do not see how this can rationally be denied. As for the northern Province, it cannot live without its huge subsidy from mainland tax-payers.

What nobody seems to have taken on board is that my article as a whole concerned *the island* of Ireland. I would not dream of using the word "evil" to describe the Republic. The evil to which I allude encompasses 2,500 deaths whose numbers are added to in most weeks of the calendar. I suspect that most Irish people would agree with me in finding evil the society and state of affairs which makes such killing possible.

I do not hate the Irish, but I am profoundly exasperated with the drift of Irish opinion, North and South. And, however brusquely, I think it better to say plainly what I see—a province trying to be a country, a labour pool seeking to be an economy, and tragic regression all round.

EDWARD PEARCE

London

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Duane Replies to Partington

IT SEEMS a pity that under such a reverberating title as "The Disorientation of Western Education" Geoffrey Partington (ENCOUNTER, January) should spend ten-and-a-half pages in saying little more than "*Peters, Hurst, Bantock—good!; Dewey, Halsey, Holt—bad!*". The problems faced by teachers and teacher-trainers need rather more rigorous analysis than this article provides. In the final paragraphs Partington sets out unobjectionable aims—"continual debate on the nature of the educationally viable"; "the furthest extension of the educationally valuable among the masses" (perhaps that phrase is not so unobjectionable); . . . "It does not reject the importance of specific skills"—in such a way as to set himself among the righteous, the "liberal progressives" (i.e. Peters, Hurst and Bantock) as distinct from the "child-centred", "radical" and "instrumental" progressives castigated in the body of the article. In this brief letter I will comment only on his remarks about A. S. Neill and myself.

The easy flagellation of those whom Geoffrey Partington condemns is made possible by first tying each of them to labelled stakes already prepared for them. A. S. Neill, one of his early victims, is branded—as he has so often been branded by others—as a "child-centred progressive". Now, one does not make much fuss when such a tag is affixed by some journalist who the day before had to deal with a bout of swine-fever and the day after will have to report on the visit of the local MP. But it is quite another thing when the writer, by the title of his piece and the language he uses, seeks to convey the impression that he actually knows what he is talking about.

At no point does Partington seek to compare what A. S. Neill did in Summerhill with what can be taken from his rather chatty books. Nowhere is it made clear that the children who came to Summerhill had been rejected by other schools, had severe psychological problems, or had been sent to Neill because their parents approved of his methods. Neill often slanged other schools for the harm they had done to "his kids". But a scholar does not only listen to what a man says; he must base his judgment on what the man does, if his own credibility is not to be called in question.

"DUANE" is tied to the same stake. Partington does not know, or has not troubled to find out, what my views are. He does not know that I was educated by Jesuits, enjoyed the experience, and look back on my teachers with affection even though I reject Catholicism. After the publication of *Risinghill* I spent many years lecturing to heads and classroom teachers who, from press reports, had concluded that I was some kind of educational weirdo, but who, after much discussion about the practicalities of school, thought that there might be more sense in what I said and did than they had given me credit for. At least they listened with care, and often admitted that their own methods had been in response to the pressures of the job rather than the result of applied theory.

Partington credits me with having been "highly influential in teacher training and in educational discussions in the mass media". No such luck! The most I could do was to ask questions and let others work out the answers for themselves. My own educational philosophy rested on John Dewey and Sigmund Freud, both of whom remained, with some modifications from the Neo-Freudians, powerful influences throughout the whole of my teaching career.

HAD Partington read John Dewey a little more closely he might have come across the chapter that opens one of his last books—*Experience and Education*—and is entitled "Traditional versus Progressive Education". Perhaps he could still read it with advantage; he might then wish that he had not embarked on so superficial a survey of the controversies in contemporary education.

MICHAEL DUANE

Teignmouth
Devon

IT IS, of course entirely possible that the analysis I offered of some aspects of recent educational thought is untenable. Mr Duane is, however, mistaken in attributing ignorance to me about the theory and practice employed by A.S. Neill and by himself. During the 1960s, when I taught in a Greater London comprehensive school, I listened attentively to friends who served under Mr Duane at Risinghill, read carefully Leila Berg's panegyric to him, and heard him lecture. A little later as a headmaster in Suffolk I took a keen personal interest in Neill's Summerhill, as well as reading his somewhat repetitive works.

No doubt Mr Duane is right in holding that if I read Dewey's *Experience and Education* again I might understand it better; but this is the case with reading in general. I have reread Mr Duane's letter several times, but have failed so far to discover other than *ad hominem* irrelevancies. *Risinghill* still appears on course-lists in teacher education, although not on as many as Mr Duane might wish. My recollection of the educational columns of *The Guardian, The Observer* and *The Sunday Times* of the 1960s is that Mr Duane's school, together with Countesthorpe and Kidbrooke, received more mention than any other maintained schools in England and Wales.

GEOFFREY PARTINGTON

Flinders University
South Australia

Walking in Munich

LAURENCE LERNER'S "A Walk in Munich" (ENCOUNTER, March) is warm-hearted and entertaining, but is curiously lopsided and contains a number of inaccuracies.

1. Personally, I do not think the architecture of the *Haus der Kunst* can be redeemed, even by an indeed "naive pleasure" in "its brutal, heavy simplicity". Its demonstrative taciturnity is all too expressive of the Nazi ideology. One cannot lie in architecture.

2. I do not want to belabour a *jeu d'esprit* with a sledgehammer, but why not even a mention of Ludwig I, who changed the face of Munich in the first half of the 19th century. Herrenchiemsee is a palace; Neuschwanstein is generally regarded as a castle.

3. I do not believe Alfred Delp was 'involved in the Von Stauffenberg-von Moltke group". He resisted quite on his own. Stauffenberg and Moltke were ultimately not even involved with each other. The first believed in action and carried it out, albeit unsuccessfully, while Moltke did not. He proudly wrote to his wife from prison: "We have been sentenced for merely *thinking.*"

4. The *Feldherrnhalle* was indeed guarded by *SA*-men during the Third *Reich.* and I believe had to be saluted. But the memorial to the "Martyrs of the Movement" consisted of two small temple-like structures on the Königsplatz, opposite the *Braunes Haus.* They were demolished after the War.

5. Finally, Wackersdorf is a plant for processing spent fuel elements, extracting plutonium and uranium from them for re-use, and casting the radioactive waste in glass for safe storage. It does not generate "radioactivity"—it neutralises it. The opposition to it described by Laurence Lerner is partly irrational, and partly "on principle" against everything connected with nuclear energy, including installations that make it safer—not very much more rational. But to refer to Wackersdorf as a "fast-breeder reactor", as Lerner does, is a careless error.

MANFORD BELMORE

Erlangen
West Germany

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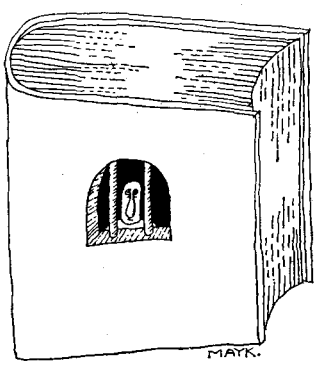
Life & Letters Today

Budapest



POLIT-PORN: *János Kádár is today hailed by the West as a "liberal". Presumably he merits this description for allowing such things as "Time" and "Newsweek" to enter his domain. Yet Ronald Reagan tolerates all these things and more, and still no scribe dares refer to him as a liberal.*

A recent visit here [William McGurn writes] suggests that Mr Kádár's liberalism might not hold up under test. The first sign was not long in coming. At Budapest's Ferihegy Airport, Customs Officer 0702 squealed with delight upon discovering two books—Jozsef Cardinal Mindszenty's *Memoirs* and Melvin J. Lasky's *The Hungarian Revolution*—in my luggage.

Prior to my visit, assurances had been given that anything except pornography was okay, but Officer 0702 evidently hadn't been told. After a bit of nastiness over my refusal to sign a document I couldn't read, I signed a form acknowledging in English that two books had been confiscated.

AMERICAN SPECTATOR

London

SWISS WONDER: **It is not really possible, is it, that a modern democratic State could function without a full-time salaried legislature [Geoffrey Wheatcroft writes]? The Swiss Parliament sits for all of 12 weeks a year, and its members receive no salary.**

What a wonderful country! Switzerland has no army at all in the conventional sense, and manages to be the best-defended country in Europe. It has no professional parliament—and no professional politicians—and manages to be the best-governed country in Europe. I have always loved Switzerland; when I return from the Alps in future I can say, "I have seen the past, and it works."

SUNDAY TELEGRAPH

London

COMMUNITARIANISM: *Why is everything a "community" now [Charles Moore writes]? Secondary schools have become "community colleges". The rates are going to be replaced with a "community charge". We are encouraged to have "community policing".*

There is a Gay community and an Intelligence community and a Defence community. I have recently discovered that gipsies are now the Travelling community. Old people and the mentally ill are told that it is better for them to live "in the community".

As so often, this buzz word expresses a sense of guilt. Never has the word community been used so often. Never has there been so little genuine community to be found.

DAILY EXPRESS

Florida

SENSE OF HISTORY: **Mrs Yvelene de Marcellus Marix, 61, descendant of the Emperor Charlemagne, has defeated a descendant of the Russian Czars to keep her job as mayor of America's most exclusive resort, Palm Beach, Florida.**

Mrs Marix defeated Mr Paul Romanoff Ilyinsky, 59, by 2,689 votes to 1,668 to win a second term in office.

DAILY TELEGRAPH

London

QUEEN'S ENGLISH: *The BBC has taken steps to curb its Radio One disc jockeys—not, as some might have hoped, by sticking Elastoplast over their mouths but at least by telling them to get on with their job and stop drivelling about their night life and their vulgar taste in cars.*

Personally [Keith Waterhouse writes] I don't care what DJs talk about so long as they do it in something approximating to proper English. On the car radio a few mornings ago I heard a DJ on some local station or other appealing on behalf of what he called a "Blood Doning Centre". Having invented a new verb he then proceeded to conjugate it:

"So if you don't mind doning blood, why don't you go and done some right now, and you'll feel really good after you've doned it."

DAILY MAIL

Paris

PLURALISM: **Critics rightly condemn the savaging of language by the various media. But we all know that language is a living thing and evolves through usage. And the word "media" itself is justified in its use as a singular noun by no less an authority than Webster's Seventh Collegiate Dictionary, to wit: "plural but sometimes used singular in construction", and so on.**

Apparently, both is good!

INTERNATIONAL HERALD TRIBUNE

London

AMERICANISM: *Watch out for a new word to describe Arts Council cuts. On Tuesday at the American Embassy, Luke Rittner was participating in a Satellite conversation with Francis Hodsoll, Chairman of America's National Endowment for the Arts.*

Hodsoll used the word **"defunding".** *Rittner, Secretary-General of the Arts Council, looked delighted to hear an expression that sounded so much better than* **"cutbacks".**

THE TIMES

London

BARDOLOGY: **The history of the British Empire is about to be turned upside down in Brent. In an attempt to boost the confidence of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds, specially-trained race equality teachers will explain delicate sociological matters in non-racist, non-sexist terms.**

White boys will be encouraged to play with black dolls, and there will be a greater emphasis on Oriental and Afro-Caribbean rather than European cultures, in an effort to improve harmony and understanding.

Many will learn how to teach Urdu, Gujerati, Bengali and Arabic—all lessons which could become compulsory in schools where large numbers of pupils speak English as a second language.

There will be a gradual reform of the timetable with previously little-known black and Asian writers, historical characters and literary figures taking their place alongside traditional English ones.

Alongside Shakespeare, children might, for example, study the texts of the sixth-century Indian poet, Kalidasa, who is generally considered to be Shakespeare's equivalent in terms of Asian culture.

LONDON EVENING STANDARD

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"A superb book..."*

THE FUTURIST MOMENT

Avant-Garde, Avant Guerre, and the Language of Rupture

MARJORIE PERLOFF

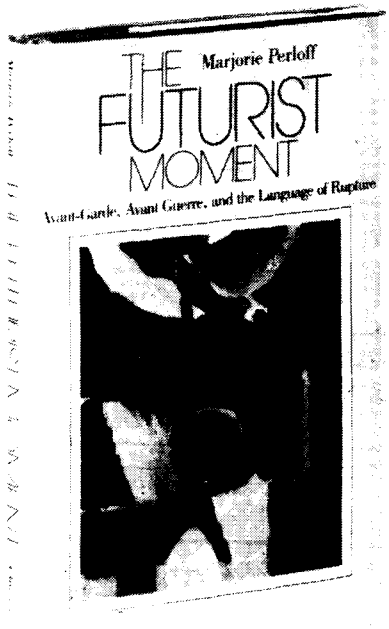
Marjorie Perloff reconstructs the "moment"—that brief, culturally explosive period before World War I—when Futurism, Cubism, Vorticism, and German Expressionism shared in a short-lived but remarkable rapprochement between avant-garde aesthetics, radical politics, and popular culture.

"A superb book, [it] advances an important revisionist argument about the history of modernism."—*James E.B. Breslin

"A primer in the aesthetic rethinkings that remain fundamental to much of the critically conscious art of our time. *The Futurist Moment* explodes the canon of literary High Modernism."
—Charles Bernstein

"It has lately become apparent that Futurism is not just a quaint, antiquated modernist sect but a vital current whose repercussions are still happening. Marjorie Perloff's brilliant study traces its history and its continuing manifestations in important and unlikely places in the arts today."
—John Ashbery

71 halftones, 5 color plates



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